

Almost Loved.

BY EMMA PASSMORE.

It was a glorious autumn day when it came to me—the beautiful dream of my life—the short-lived moment of exquisite rapture which thrills and pains every loving woman's heart.

I was sitting with my sister Nathalie in the vari-colored forest, looking up dreamily through the green boughs, just tinged with their golden and crimson flushings, and thinking, as all young girls will, of their future—that future which in fancy knows only rose-colored tints, and visions of gladness, when angel-eyes look lovingly down upon us, and life seems beautiful as a poet's dream. As I was saying, we were seated together, Nathalie and I—she with her bright, sparkling eyes, and roguish smile—that smile which had the power to deepen into one of the loftiest scorn or the most expressive ten-

deness. Very beautiful was my sister Nathalia, and I worshipped her with a kind of wild idolatry—I, who was so plain—so very plain. Her eyes were of that clear transparent color so seldom seen—a deep, dove-like hue, which sometimes seemed darkly, beautifully blue, and at others of the most intense midnight darkness. Her hair, of purplish-black, fell in glossy curls around her snowy shoulders, almost veiling the slender waist. Her cheeks and lips wore the rich glow of carnations, and from the glance of the mysterious eyes, in the impatient tap of the little foot, you read the pride of heart which belonged by right to my sister Nathalia. By right, I say; for was she not the queen of our household, the idol of our parents? and was not her queenly crown set with stars of love—priceless jewels, which numberless manly hearts had wasted upon her? Yes, wasted; for Nathalia as yet had never loved. I think sometimes she pitied; but as she said to me that day, when I ventured to expostulate with her on her coquettish actions—

“Minnie, little sister, is it my fault; or, rather, is it not man’s nature to love the beautiful, both in nature and art?—and you see there is a little of both about me; and, pray, tell me, why they should not bow at my shrine as well as at any other? Poor fellows! they cannot help it, and the most of them have so much assurance that it leaves no room for pity.”

“But, noble hearts have also bowed at your shrine, dear sister; priceless jewels have been laid at your feet, which no woman need have been ashamed to accept. Oh, can you throw away all that is worth living for? Now, tell me truly, sister, have you never loved—never felt one touch of the tender passion?”

“Never, sweet little mentor.”

“Arrived at the mature age of twenty-one years, and have never loved!”

“Oh, yes, I forgot, little sister. You know that beautiful hat that papa brought me from New York the other day? Well, I was standing before the looking-glass, trying it on, and it looked so sweet and becoming, that I positively fell in love with—myself. But that is nothing new, you know; for all Briardale says that my heart is cold as an icicle, and that I am a confirmed self-worshipper. I never did love—never want to—never will. Oh, yes, I do love you, little preacher—just a little bit; that is, if you wont scold so much, and let me do as I please. Tra, la, la!”

And the heedless girl went dancing off, gay

as a butterfly, singing and gathering flowers as she went. Every little while her light laugh broke upon my ear, and I knew that she was thinking over many tableaux, in which her unfortunate lovers had figured conspicuously. All at once I heard a scream, loud, long and piercing. That voice chilled my heart’s blood, for it was my sister Nathalia’s. Rising, I hurried as fast as I could to the spot; but my progress was slow, for I was lame, dear reader, for life. Parting the thick green boughs, a sight met my eyes which curdled the blood in my veins. There stood my beautiful sister, with a poisonous snake coiling round her slender ankle, and its deadly fangs raised, just ready to strike. I sprang forwards with desperate energy, determined to wrench it away, though it should cost me my life, when a strong hand was laid firmly on my arm, and a young man sprang forwards, clenching a knife in one hand, while, by a quick movement, he seized the snake with the other, and cut it loose. Ere I could find voice to speak my terror, the mangled monster lay writhing at our feet. My sister was very pale, and I thought that I had never seen her look more lovely. The mocking spirit had departed from her beautiful eyes, and in its place was one of the most intense gratitude. She gave him her hand, murmuring—

“I cannot find words to thank you, for you have saved my life.”

He took the little hand, and pressed it warmly.

“I do not ask thanks, fair lady, for doing that which I would do for any one in distress, and which was no inconvenience to myself.”

I saw that my sister was vexed, for she bit her red lips, and the color mounted to her transparent cheek, and slightly tinged the broad, white brow. There was something strange in his manner, I thought; could he have heard of her flirting proclivities?”

“Your name is Nathalia Summerfield?” he continued.

“Yes; and yours—”

“Is Reginald Vernon.” He looked proud as she, as he spoke, and yet there was deep admiration in the gaze with which he regarded her. Had he not done so, he would have been the first who had looked upon her without admiration. And he was her equal almost in beauty. Rich waves of golden-brown hair curled round the broad forehead, contrasting strangely with the laughing, jetty eyes beneath. There was a delicate, almost girlish flush on his cheek; but it was in the calm

mouth that his principal beauty lay, for there was something in spite of the firm lines, sweet, almost touching, in its expression.

I stood apart, half shaded by a friendly clump of bushes, a new, strange feeling, struggling at my heart; for in that hour my guardian angel had turned over a new page in my life's record; I felt for the first time that I loved and hopelessly. Oh, how gladly would I have felt the poisonous snake coiling around me, to have received one look of love, or even pity from him. But I stood alone and unnoticed, while he seated himself by my sister's side, and they both indulged in a strain of light conversation; for Nathalie had entirely recovered from her fright, and was her gay self again. It seemed in that half hour that I lived days, so intense, so strange, were the new feelings that I experienced. There was much of pain in them, for I bitterly reflected that love could not be for such as me; and yet, I would not exchange them for those of an hour before. I had reached the El Dorado of woman's life; yet, alas! how mockingly lay its golden sands before me.

I was aroused by my sister's voice, calling—"Minnie! Minnie! where are you?" I walked towards them with a painful consciousness of inferiority, which I always felt when in the presence of my sister and that of a stranger. Mr. Vernon arose, extending his hand with a smile—

"And this is Minnie Summerfield," he said. "I feel almost acquainted already, for I have heard so much of you at my uncle Vernon's, where I have been staying for the last few days. Fred and Fannie are enthusiastic in your praise, and say that every little child in Briardale knows and loves you."

"Yes Minnie is a regular divinity—the best little sister in the world. I don't know how she manages to be so awful good all the time, for I am sure it would kill me positively to be so one hour at a time," laughingly said Nathalie.

He turned towards her with a half-amused expression on his countenance, but it sobered into one of earnest thought as he offered each of us an arm, and we proceeded on our way homeward. I cannot describe to you our walk home through the grand old woods—cannot write to you the preans of triumphant music singing through my brain, and flooding my soul with rapture; but such emotions when once felt, are never forgotten. Looking back through years of pain and sorrow, on the hours which knew them, they come to us as waftings from an "Araby the blest." Leaning

on the arm of him who had first opened the flood-gates of my young heart, life seemed peopled with angels, and earth became almost Heaven. I had given my heart unasked, unsought; but it mattered little, for life had unfolded to me its full fruition. I was in a beautiful garden; the flowers of love and affection were blooming around me—blossoms of hope were hanging from the trees, and wave after wave of music came floating on the distance; but I did not care to reach forth my hand to pluck the flowerets, for I felt it would be useless; they would soon wither in my grasp. As we neared the house, I slid my hand from his arm, and fled round to my favorite arbor, for they were still talking in a strain of light badinage, and I felt that I would not be missed.

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Reginald Vernon became an almost daily visitor at our farm-house. Nathalie sang, rode, and talked with him by the hour, and I saw that my gay sister's heart was touched at last. Perhaps love made me more watchful, and gave me a deeper insight into her nature, for though she was still wild and reckless in his presence, I noticed when we were alone, her frequent fits of abstraction, from which she would start with a sigh; and one starry moonlight night I waked to see her walking our room with clasped hands, and murmuring words of endearment—"Reginald! dear Reginald!" I then know how deep was that love, for through my own heart I had obtained the key to hers. What was very unusual, she would take long walks by herself, never asking me to accompany her. Oh, how my heart yearned towards my idolized sister, and mourned in secret over her seeming estrangement.

Reginald had not visited us for a week, and daily my sister's cheek grew paler and thinner. We had wandered out as was our custom, in the wild-wood, each not knowing whither the other had gone. Seating myself on a grassy mound, behind a ledge of rocks, I commenced twining a wreath of crimson leaves and autumn flowers. The branches wove above a natural arbor, and concealed me from the view of passers-by, while I indulged in those reveries so kindred to my nature. I was startled from my dreams by approaching footsteps, and earnest voices, coming nearer and nearer—the voices of Reginald and his uncle Vernon, but was relieved by seeing them pause a few feet from me, at the foot of a large elm, while they continued their conversation.

"I can't think how you can make any comparison between the sisters," resumed the elder Vernon. "It is true the elder has been somewhat of a coquette; but she will settle down in time. She is a glorious creature, my boy, and will make a wife that half the world will envy you—one that any man might well be proud of. Besides, she has an independent fortune in her own right, which, joined to what her father will be able to leave her, will make her quite an heiress. You know we old men always look at these things. Better win her—that is, if you can; but I promise you no easy task, for scores have failed in that direction, both in city and country."

"You know, uncle, that I do not care for wealth; I have enough to satisfy me, and when I marry, I want a wife in the true sense of the word, and must confess that I prefer at present quiet little Minnie, with her soft gray eyes and wavy brown hair, to her more brilliant sister. She makes me think of a sweet wild rose-bud, or a modest violet, just gemmed with morning dew."

"Tut, tut! none of your poetry for me, my boy; I don't understand it; but, take my word for it, you'd better marry a wife that won't disgrace you—one that you won't be ashamed to introduce to your fashionable friends. Why, that plain little thing! you would tire of her in a week; you surely don't mean to propose to her?"

"Why, I certainly have not seriously thought of it yet, for I am afraid she either dislikes or fears me, and I can seldom get a chance to speak more than a word to her. She is either very shy, or else don't fancy your humble servant; so don't be uneasy, uncle."

"Well, I am glad of it; it would be a pity for your attractions to be thrown away on a girl like her; besides, she is lame."

"The lameness is scarcely perceptible now; but, let us change the subject, for you know I will choose my-own wife, anyhow."

"Yes, yes; you were always a contrary fellow, like myself; but I trust you will choose my little favorite, Nathalie, for——"

The remainder of the sentence was lost to me, as they turned and passed on in the opposite direction. I felt weak and faint from excess of joy. He then had thought of me—even now, almost loved me; for I noticed the deep tenderness with which he spoke my name. Oh, could the deep feelings of my heart but be returned in all their fulness, life would be an Eden indeed. But there came a reaction;

Nathalie loved him with all her passionate nature, and I, should he even dare to wed me, would only be a disgrace to him. The thought was madness. No, I would rather suffer years of anguish, than bring him one pang of pain. I threw myself back on the turf, with mixed feelings of joy and sorrow, and in doing this, I caught, through an opening in the rocks, a glimpse of Nathalie on the other side, weeping bitterly. The thought flashed across me in a moment. She had heard all. Her tears moved me painfully, it being the first time I had seen her weep since her childhood.

"My darling sister, thou hast always been loved, and to thee I owe the tenderest—almost the only love which hath brightened my pathway. I will not stand in thy way now," I murmured to myself—"it is happiness enough to know that he has almost loved me."

I arose, and passed with noiseless footsteps to the house. My resolve was taken. I would leave my home, and go to my aunt Esther's, with whom I had always been a favorite, and knew that she at least would welcome me gladly. Entering the yard, I was met by the outstretched hand of Reginald, who had preceded me.

"Good evening, Minnie! Are we never going to be friends? Floyd and Fannie are complaining dreadfully that I keep you from uncle's. Now, tell me that I have not done so."

He seated me by his side on the porch, and holding my hand with gentle firmness, called himself my father confessor. Though they were only trivial questions that he asked, I felt his keen eyes reading my face, which flushed in spite of myself; but I thought of Nathalie, and by a desperate effort, subdued all outward emotion, as I replied—

"You must think yourself of a great deal of consequence, Mr. Reginald. I have little time left for visiting, as I leave for P—— in a week."

"Going away!—you going away! Why, Minnie, this is sudden—unexpected. What shall we all do without you, and how long do you remain?"

"Perhaps forever," trembled on my lips; but a sudden faintness seized me, and I would have fallen, had not his strong arm sustained me.

"Why, Minnie, child, how white you are! The night air is not good for you. I will bid you good evening, and you must take care of yourself—darling"

He murmured the last word half unconsciously to himself, but how it sent the lava tide

rushing through my veins. He held my hand close for an instant, and seemed about to speak, but I checked him, with—

"See! there is Nathalie. You must not go, Mr. Reginald; stay—good-night."

I passed in, and went quickly up to my bedroom, and sat down by the open window, looking out upon the calm, starry night—so peaceful, so pure—so different from my wildly-throbbing heart. Long through the evening I heard them singing as of old, and their merry voices jarred strangely on my overstrained nerves. I knew that Nathalie was now in truth bent on winning him, and that night I prayed that she might succeed; that, though it should crush all the life from my tortured heart, my darling sister might be happy. Yes, there God gave me strength to pray that prayer. Have you ever felt that all most precious might be yours, and yet you dared not grasp it? That love—unbounded love awaited you—a cup of nectar, held by unseen hands to your lips, and yet you dared not drink from it? An Eden, with its rose-crowned hills and grassy fields, and yet you had not the power to enter? Kneeling, praying for her, with form bathed in silvery moonbeams, I realized this in all its fullness. Long I wrestled with myself, feeling the dark clouds still overshadowing me—the stormy billows of sorrow rolling o'er me, till at last it seemed as if half the bitterness was taken away—peace folded its wings o'er my heart, and, like a weary child, I fell asleep. Sweet dreams came to me of glorious music and white-browed angels, while one more beautiful than the rest laid his hand on my forehead, and murmured—"All is well! all is well! Child, it is only through suffering and tribulation that we can enter into the courts of the Most High."

Morning dawned in all its beauty, but for me there was no rest. Henceforth I felt that action, unwearied action alone could ease the gnawing at my heart-strings; yet she must be happy, my idolized one, my glorious sister, cost what it might. Gradually I schooled myself to look upon her future. I saw her joyously radiant, arrayed in her bridal robes, standing before the marriage altar, and he was by her side. He who I felt might have been mine, had I so willed it. I painted her as the happy wife, presiding over his splendid mansion, surrounded by hosts of admiring friends, the cynosure of all eyes, and he too was there, pride beaming from every noble feature. Alas! he never could be proud of me. Oh!

no, I was so plain, so hopelessly plain. The week passed swiftly by in preparations for my departure, and at last the morning for leave-taking came. I was arrayed in my travelling dress, standing in the little arbor that I had loved so much, where I had come to take a last look at familiar scenes, that perhaps I might not gaze upon again for years, and think upon the happy hours which Nathalie and I had spent together ere we both knew the fullest awakening of woman's life. Bidding a fond adieu to the trees and flowers, the clinging vines and trellised bowers, I was preparing to depart, when a hand parted the grape-vines and Reginald Vernon stood before me.

"Out among your sister spirits, the birds and flowers, Miss Minnie. They will miss you, I think. Do you know I sometimes think they hold communion"—He did not finish the sentence, for a large nosogay fell at our feet, and Nathalie appeared at the entrance, radiantly beautiful.

"Write to me, will you, little Minnie?" He bent his head till his brown curls almost touched my darker ones, and his breath fanned my cheek.

"Do you know that I have penetrated your *nom de plume*—know to whom we are indebted for the sweet songs with which your sister and I have whiled away many happy hours, and that I would prize a correspondence with the author very much."

"Certainly, I will answer all letters addressed to me by friends," I answered, coldly. "Good bye!"

He released my hand quickly, and made room for my sister as I passed from the arbor.

A few days found me in the city of P——, amid new scenes, trying to forget my life's great bitterness. To my Aunt Esther all had been revealed, for suffering herself from an early disappointment, I knew that there in her kind heart I could find rest and sympathy. She was my father's youngest sister, and had never married. In early youth she must have been very lovely, for at the age of forty she was still a noble looking woman. The dark waving hair was smoothed plainly back in glossy bands from a brow of marble whiteness, and the holy spiritual eyes had in them a look of heaven. Around the full red lips there lingered a smile of wondrous sweetness, and yet it was one born of suffering, which only lingers on the countenances of those who have passed through the deep waters of tribulation, and have ascended on the heavenly

side. Hers was a loveliness more to be felt than described, and pen or pencil were powerless to portray the matchless beauty of my Aunt Esther.

On making her my confidante she confided to me her own heart-history, reserving only as I had done the name of the loved and lost one. Separated by pride and misunderstanding—which so often bars from each other young and loving hearts—their lives had drifted far apart. He had married, and she still remained true to her first and only love. How I honored her for it.

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It came at last, the news that I so much dreaded yet wished to hear. They were “engaged,” so Nathalie wrote, and aunt and I must be at Briardale the coming week to assist in preparations for the wedding.

“Reginald Vernon, how strange!” I heard my aunt murmur as she read the letter. “So that was his name, poor child!” she said, stroking my hair, “it has been an unfortunate name for both of us.”

“Oh aunt, I cannot, cannot go!” She pressed her warm lips to my forehead ere she said—

“Minnie, would you pause now in your self-sacrifice. Do you not know that it is only through suffering we grow strong and arrive at the true perfectness of life?

“Such natures as ours can bear almost anything, but you have truly said ‘it would kill Nathalie to see her first idol broken and laid in dust at her feet.’ Even if you have acted unwisely it is too late to repent now, dear child. Let us kneel and pray for God to give us strength.”

Oh! the power of that prayer; the incense fell upon my soul like dew on parched flowers, and my heart learned there to lay its burden of care on the bosom of God.

I arose, strengthened and purified, ready to take up the burden of life again without a murmur. Preparations were soon made for our departure to Briardale, and we were on our homeward journey. I cannot write with what delight my father greeted his pet sister, and even I, plain and neglected as I had always been, was welcomed home with joy from my year’s absence.

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Autumn again had put on her robes of crimson and gold, and the dry leaves rustled beneath our tread, as Aunt Esther and I pursued our way to the familiar haunts that she had known in girlhood. Arm in arm we walked to-

gether ‘neath the maple boughs, and talked of our future;—she laying plans for my advancement, and I listening, for we should always live together, aunt said. Reginald and Nathalie had also wandered out to enjoy the beautiful scenery, and we came near them ere we knew it, seated on a grassy bank, subdued from their old mirthfulness at thought, no doubt, of the approaching solemn rites which were to unite them forever.

“How beautiful!” burst from my aunt’s lips, as she gazed on the pair; and beautiful truly they were, he with his deep thoughtful eyes and noble presence, and she so full of life and happiness, with the rich carnations brightening on her cheeks, and deep love beaming from every feature.

But list! what step is that in the undergrowth of bushes behind them. My heart stood still as I saw a stooping, crouching figure almost at her side, but my tongue was dumb with terror. Too late! too late! to warn them—the report of a pistol was heard. The ball had entered my sister’s heart, and she lay bleeding and dying on the turf.

“So die, false one!” a hoarse voice shouted. “Did you think after destroying so many hearts to enjoy happiness yourself,” and ere the palsied hand of Reginald could arrest the mad speaker, another report was heard, and the murderer and the murdered lay dead at our feet.

Swiftly was the news borne to the agonized household, but my parents regarded the messenger with a cold, stony gaze—they wept not, for their agony was too deep for tears. And there lay Francis Devereaux, a rejected lover of Nathalie’s, whom she had lured on till his love became almost madness,—there he lay with her picture on his heart, and his hands stained with her young life-blood; truly his was a bitter revenge! leaving a blight as it did o’er all our family circle. In all that agonized household, Aunt Esther alone was calm and collected; she passed among us like a ministering angel, speaking words of comfort, and binding up the bleeding hearts.

Reginald sat alone in the library with a face like marble, seeming to shun the presence of every one.

“Poor boy! how he does suffer!” I heard my mother say, “and to-day they were to have been married. I trust his father will come soon, for perhaps his presence will soften his stony grief.”

Thus my parents’ sympathy was given only to Reginald; they thought not of me, crushed

in spirit as I was by the loss; for oh! how I loved her. Reginald's mother had died ere he learned to lisp her name, but his surviving parent, as soon as news came of the dreadful affliction, hastened to the scene of sorrow.

He came, a noble looking man, with deep blue eyes and dark wavy hair, in which a few threads of silver were faintly scattered. He did not resemble Reginald, save in the expressive mouth and the rare smile which had such a touch of sadness in it.

"May I look at your sister?" he asked, after we had conversed a few moments together, for the rest had abandoned themselves to their wild grief, and could not see a stranger. "Poor Reginald! poor boy! his turn has come to drink from life's bitter cup, God alone can comfort him now."

I led the way to the upper room, where they had robed her for the grave in her bridal dress of rich satin and lace and wreath of orange blossoms, for this was to have been her bridal day. Poor Nathalie.

"How beautiful!" he murmured, as he laid his hand on her icy forehead. "So lovely in death, what must she have been in life. So young to die! what a sad lot! and yet it is better than mine, to live on with blighted hopes and broken affections through long weary years. My child, I see that you also have suffered, but remember that it is only through suffering that we arrive at perfect peace."

I heard a stifled sob, and turning saw my aunt with her back towards us in the recess of a window weeping bitterly. It was the first time that I had seen her mourning for the dead, though I knew that she oft wept in secret. Striving to gain her composure, and seeing she was perceived, she came forward towards us and pressed round on the opposite side of the coffin.

"This is Mr. Vernon aunt"—their eyes met.

"Esther!"

"Paul!"

"And is it thus we meet after long, long years!"

There was a clasping of hands—one holy kiss, and I passed quickly out, for I knew that my Aunt Esther's heart had at last found rest.

We laid her away in her girlish beauty, my darling sister Nathalie, with the little hands folded over the still, white bosom, and the dark curls lying motionless on the satin pillow. Reginald and I had scarcely spoken since that dreadful day; it seemed as if a wide gulf lay between us, and after the body was laid to rest he took his departure for a far

distance land; but in the older Mr. Vernon I found that sympathy which a father had never given, yet perhaps it was because I was such a favorite with my aunt, for they seemed now almost inseparable, and she, oh! how radiant she looked in her new happiness.

There was a quiet wedding in our parlor a few months after my sister's burial. The bride was still in mourning, and though youthful in appearance, was no longer young, but it was a union of souls both for earth and heaven. How fervently I prayed for God's choicest blessings to rest on Uncle Paul and Aunt Esther. "You will go with us," they said, when about to depart on their wedding tour; but no! I could not, for I felt it my duty to remain with my parents, who drooped daily beneath their dreadful affliction. In a year I followed my broken-hearted mother to the grave, and my father did not long survive her; but they lived long enough to return my affection in all its fullness, and I became loved as even Nathalie never had been.

"You must come to us," my uncle wrote. "you will be our child now, little Minnie. Poor lamb! how tired, how weary you must be of your life-struggles. We will be your father and mother, and you shall never leave us again."

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And so I have found a home with those I love best, and my weary spirit folded its troubled wings, and I at last have found peace. From my heart's fulness have I written, and again take up life's refrain, which is not all of sorrow. The chaplet of fame has been placed almost unsought around my brow; but what care I for fame. The laurel leaves and fragrant flowers can never satisfy a woman's loving heart; and there are times when I cannot still its wild throbbings. 'Tis well he is not here, else it might betray me. I sit in my little room with the firelight painting fanciful pictures on the wall, and playing hide and seek among the crimson curtains. The time once was when I dreamed that my life's happiness was forever wrecked, yet still there is much worth living for. I sit here, thinking how much good we can do in the world, and in doing so only make our heavenly life the brighter—how many widows and orphans there are to be succored—how many hearts to be comforted, and bleeding wounds to be bound up. Ah! yes, it is only in living for others that we are truly blessed.

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It has been a month since I wrote the fore-

going, and oh! what changes a month can bring. To-day my soul is singing psalms of thanksgiving, and I feel that I am almost too happy, so richly am I blessed, for that which I scarcely dared to hope for is mine—Reginald's love.

He came to us just three weeks ago, after three years' absence. There was a constraint in our intercourse, an avoiding of each other, which I saw pained my aunt and uncle very much; but I could not help it, for I feared lest he should read my secret.

It was in the quiet hush of the twilight that my aunt came to me just one week ago, and placing her arm around me, said,

"I saw how it would end, Minnie, Reginald was talking of leaving us again, so I told him all, and in return he has told me that he loved you better than you ever dreamed—has always loved you. Minnie, the best part of your life shall not be wasted as mine has been. See, Reginald waits to hear the assurance from your own lips that he is really loved."

We were left alone together, and oh! the fulness of that hour, when heart spoke back to heart, and each felt that its weary pilgrimage was over. Yes, I at last have found rest, and when spring comes with her mantle of green and coronal of flowers, I have promised to be his wife. Wife! Oh! what a holy name! how full of golden promise the life spread out before me! God grant to make me worthy of it!

I have just finished writing, and Reginald has taken up the manuscript and read the title.

"Why have you written *almost*, why not *wholly* loved? for surely none can be truer, deeper, holier than ours, strengthened as it is by time and sorrow—is it not so, Minnie?"

Grandma's Conquest.

BY M'LE CAPRICE.

"I'm sorry I can't invite you to dinner, old fellow, because it is a sort of solemn observance—a sacred rite of inhospitality, nobody being allowed to be present but the family connection; but they will all be delighted to see you in the evening, and I have some charming cousins, I assure you."

"Yes; I was just about to ask if age was a necessary qualification for admission into your ancient circle. Have I ever seen your cousins, Ned, and are they likely to trouble me with their attentions, bashful as I am, you know?"

"Not much, I should say. Carrie Atherton is of your elegantés; she will expect you to pay the attention, and a great deal of it. There are four Fannings, all pretty, and all shy; Mary and Julia Davenport, splendid women, both, much admired abroad; Fanny Dana; ugly, but smart, Emily Fay."

"Sweet name!"

"Desperately sweet, but none of your business; a sweet that shall be guarded with stings. I say, sir, no poaching on my manor, if you please. I expect to be engaged to her myself before the evening is out—so, beware! If you want to enter the family, try somebody else. And last, but not least, my chief favorite and ally, Kate Lovering."

"Deliver me from Kates! A set of romping hyenas! That name always plays the very deuce with a girl; it is sure to make them either flirt or hoyden, and generally both. I have suffered too much from them already, and have vowed a vow never to know one again. With all due respect to your cousin, your family connection is safe from me on that score; and can't I avoid being presented to her?"

"Very well; just as you please. Not that she would look at you—a perfect little princess, and the flower of the family—she would make you repent and retract your infidelities very soon, I fancy."

"No doubt. Heaven forbid!"

"And now, farewell; for I go. It seems barbarous to leave you in this barn of a hotel, and in ignorance of the sublime venison, the glorious turkey, the divine ducks, and the superhuman plum-pudding of my Aunt Mary's Christmas table; but the fiat has gone forth, and I am compelled to partake of them alone."

"Say no more, say no more, Ned; I shall get through the time very well with a good dinner

here, a glass of wine, and a cigar." And Ned Holland, reluctantly leaving his friend alone, walked over to his Uncle James's, rather uncomfortable with the sense of inhospitality he felt in obeying the strict rules that existed against the introduction of any strangers into the family circle at the Christmas Eve feast. The circle in itself was large enough; the ramifications of relationship embraced half a county, and it was a time-honored observance, dictated by convenience no less than custom, that only "the family connection" should sit down to Mr. James Holland's bountiful board on the day before Christmas, and inaugurate the festivities with a yearly meeting, from which none liked to be absent, and which had grown to be almost like the Scottish "gathering of the clan." On this particular occasion, Ned had hoped that the regulation would be relaxed in favor of the friend he had brought down with him to share the hospitalities of that kindly mansion; but, on broaching the subject to his respected relatives, in the midst of their warm welcome to himself, he found the usual calm opposition made to his request.

"Your Uncle James wouldn't hear of such a thing," said his Aunt Mary, as she brought him cake and wine. "It is against the rules, my dear boy, and musn't be, though I am sorry to refuse you. But you know I am always glad to see your friends at any other time, and shall insist on his coming here this evening; there will be other company then, and I should like both of you to stay over the holidays; all the girls will be here, and you will enjoy it, I think."

Various pairs of eyes, black, brown and blue, which had looked rebelliously at kind Aunt Mary, while she refused the first invitation, brightened again as she gave the last two, and accompanied them with a meaning smile at her nephew, and Miss Emily Fay, also present. The young lady's cheeks wore the precise hue of "celestial rosy red" that Ned could have wished, and blushing himself more than is expected of a lawyer, he hastily departed with her to greet the rest of the "extensive family connection," and lament, as his cousins loudly called upon him to do, the absence of grandma from this annual meeting, which was a matter of disappointment to everybody.

"Too bad, that grandma can't come," cried all her indignant young descendants, expecting of the lavish gifts of toys and confectionery that always came with their beloved ancestor. And, "Very provoking of Aunt Bell," com-

plained the elder branches, who desired her presence from less selfish motives, while her own sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, gathered from many different places to see her, and finding the greatest pleasure of their annual reunion in her mild presence, felt the loss more deeply and more quietly.

Grandfather was only a faint memory to his elder grand-children, a legend to the younger, who were only acquainted with him through the picture of a fine, fresh-looking gentleman, in a Colonel's uniform, which hung in the drawing-room at Uncle James's, his eldest son. But grandma was a fully appreciated blessing to her young descendants, who loved her with devotion. She had been very lovely in her youth, and her portrait, representing a beautiful little creature on horseback, in a riding habit and cap, with long plumes, was greatly admired by modern artists visiting at her son's house. She was still charming in her old age, though the brown curls had turned snow-white, and the fine eyes were slightly dimmed, but the spirit and grace which had rendered her so fascinating in early life, years could not destroy. Her manner, of old-school courtesy, gentle, dignified, and winning, was admired by strangers only less than by her disappointed grand-children, who had long looked forwards to her appearance as the crowning attraction of the yearly festival. But Aunt Bell's very young baby had chosen to be ill of some infant disorder, which had not only delayed its presentation to its new cousins, but had also kept at home its fond mamma and dear, kind grandma, who gave up the great pleasure of the family meeting to comfort the baby's parents through this time of anxiety and trouble.

Great was the dissatisfaction that prevailed among the bereaved descendants, thus deprived of her society, but most indignant of all, was Miss Kate Lincoln Lovering, grandma's special pet and favorite, only daughter of her only daughter, long since dead, and inheritor of her maiden name and maiden beauty. She was said to look exactly as Grandma Holland had looked at her age, eighteen, and, allowing for the different style of dress and coiffure, was certainly very like the lovely equestrian of the picture, and very like the ancestral beauties in a host of old family portraits up stairs. She inherited, too, grandmother's fascination of manner, and winning sweetness, but being petted and wilful, had added some traits of her own to those of the maternal line, and had been thoroughly spoiled by her father, a dashing

young officer, killed in battle, before he left her as a legacy to the fond guardianship of his wife's mother. So now grandmother lived with her youngest son, Uncle John; Kate lived there too, and had come as unwilling representative of his absent family, and the messenger of unwelcome tidings at which nobody was more disappointed than herself, who had been much disgusted of late with the attention exacted for the imaginary ailments of a very stout, very ugly, and very cross baby, that had completed the list of its outrages by keeping its revered grandma at home, and disappointing a great number of people.

"But, I will tell you what I am going to do, Cousin Ned," said she, winding up an account of her injuries—"I am grandma's deputy; I have brought all her presents to distribute; and, better than that, I've brought her dress and cap, and bought a white false front, and I intend myself to appear as grandma, 'for this night only,' if you will help me, and if nobody stops me."

Who *could* stop Kate? Not Uncle James, who found it sufficient warrant for the young deputy's assumption that his mother had consented to the frolic, and sent her joking orders that all due respect should be rendered to her representative; nor Aunt Mary, who unpacked the well-known black satin dress, white crapo cap and collar, and delicate lace mittens, in which grandma always appeared, from Kate's trunk, and pardoned the jest she had at first thought so irreverent as she gently laid by these tokens of her approval of her darling's plan; while the other grave authorities, being won over by Kate's coaxing and caressing, began to see in it a very amusing episode, and to anticipate the delight of their disappointed children.

So the *distract* Ned, already looking up and down the long saloon for Emily, readily consented to further the scheme with his best assistance, and forgot the joke he had in store for her, which came out all in due time at the dinner-table, where Miss Kate appeared in her own character, her personation of grandma being reserved for the evening. The young gentleman's devotion to his dinner and to his fair neighbor—about equally divided in his affections—had been a subject of great amusement to the mischievous girl, whose own appetite for turkey was always secondary to her love of the ludicrous, and in replying to her laughing sallies, his wit brightened over his champagne to the point of repeating that part of the morning's conversation which

personally concerned her, and Horace Derwent's speech, with such additions as his fancy suggested, to the amusement of the whole table, and the partial discomfiture of Miss Kate.

"I'll pay him off, the impertinent fellow!" she said to herself, "as sure as my name is Kate! A romping hyena, indeed—a flirt and a hoyden! and particularly begs not to be introduced! We shall see, sir!" and, with burning cheeks, and a head full of schemes of vengeance, she ran up stairs to prepare for her evening's appearance, wisely reserving her quarrel with Ned till a more convenient season, for she wanted him to paint in the wrinkles on her blooming face, as he had always done at their Christmas theatricals, where she played the cross aunts and heavy dowagers, while her less lovely and attractive cousins took the more becoming dresses and rôles.

He was unceremoniously turned out of the room afterwards, and she was enrobed by the laughing girls in the rich, old-fashioned garments, which proved a world too wide for her round waist and pretty shoulders, for though grandma was a slender old lady, she loved ease and comfort more than her fair descendant. But there are few difficulties in the feminine toilette that pins and patience cannot overcome, and when Ned was recalled, to put the finishing touches to his work, he insisted on bestowing a filial embrace on his beloved grandmother, and pressing a respectful kiss on her wrinkled cheek. Other cousins being admitted, fairly started at the well-known figure before them, with its snow-white curls beneath the crimped edges of the widow's cap, the brilliant dark eyes shining kindly behind the gold-bowed spectacles, the sweet, wrinkled face, half-hidden by these various accessories, the bent, slender figure, in its black satin robes of sweeping length and amplitude, bound at the wrists and neck with white crape and jet ornaments; grandma's own discreet watch, with the bunch of seals that had been grandfather's, a silver knitting sheath on her side, and her own little delicate hands, quite lost in black lace mittens, laid gently over her favorite work of a baby's lamb's wool sock. The little actress drew down her rosy upper lip over the pearls beneath, and imitated grandmama's low, cheerful voice; then, after submitting to the affectionate attentions of all the grown-up young gentlemen, her cousins, who seized this opportunity, while she dared not resist, for fear of injuring her costume, to claim all

the arrears of kisses which she had denied her for the past five years, she was led down stairs by the children, screaming with laughter, and yet half reverent of the figure that looked so much like their dear, absent relative.

They enshrined her in grandmother's own great arm-chair, where she proceeded to distribute her generous stock of gifts, amid the riotous mirth and enjoyment of the children, and the surprise and amusement of the elders. The scene was hardly over before the arrivals began, and the great drawing-rooms were soon filled with friends and acquaintances, who were duly presented to grandmother's deputy, as usually to herself, and though disappointed in her absence, keenly enjoyed the spirit and grace of her young representative's personation, and formed a pleased and admiring circle about her great chair.

Horace Derwent was the last; fashionably late, for he had feared to be too early, and punished his impatience by delay. An orphan, without home-ties or pleasures, he had a strong curiosity to see this family assembly, and longed to join in their gayety, but among the happy faces he felt an alien and a stranger; their mirth depressed and saddened him, and he begged his chaperon, Ned, for a few minutes in which to familiarize himself with the scene, before beginning the work of introduction. They had halted in the little boudoir, in which Grandma Holland's portrait was enshrined, separated from the long drawing-rooms by a set of silken curtains, and here Ned left him, the more readily as he saw Emily in the distance surrounded by a group of attentive gentlemen, and enjoying their society far too much for the comfort of her observant lover. He was gone some time, occupied in hovering on the edge of this lively group, skilfully dispersing it, and rendering generally uncomfortable those who persisted in staying, before he bethought himself of Horace, and returned to find him intent upon the portrait, which he was studying with admiring earnestness.

"Ah, what a lovely face!" he cried, as Ned touched his shoulder. "What spirit and grace! what a beautiful creature to love and live with! Pity there are no such women now!" he said, covering his confusion with a laugh, as he took his friend's arm and moved away. "Modern female education not only deforms the bodies but cramps the minds and extinguishes the spirits of our fashionable girls, except in the case of those rude hoydens that infest society, but where in real life do we

ever see such sweet, sprightly attitudes, such a charming face, such—"

"Oh Horace!" cries the injured Ned, "for heaven's sake spare me your raptures, and I'll introduce you to the original."

"Who? Where?"

"My grandmother."

"Oh, ah, yes," said Horace, drily, "a most delightful old lady, no doubt, but I should prefer something of a little more recent date."

"I thought you were disgusted with modern belles, but you shall see enough of them after this presentation is over. Allons!" and he dragged his reluctant friend, who dreaded to behold the wreck of the fresh girlish beauty he had just been admiring, towards the high crimson-velvet arm-chair, standing like a throne at the end of the long apartment, and around which a crowd of gentlemen, young and old, were gathered, paying their lively homage to the old lady sitting in it, a little shaded from the glare of the great chandeliers, and listening with a pleasant smile, while she plied the knitting work she held in her delicate lace-covered hands.

"My grandmother, Madam Holland, Mr. Horace Devent."

The old lady looked up from her knitting with a start, and cast a sharp glance at Master Ned Holland, as she hastily acknowledged the low reverence of his friend. Horace could have sworn that a blush suffused the fine features turned towards him, as in the portrait, that the aged fingers trembled as they dropped the work they held, which he courteously restored with respectful zeal, and that a momentary expression of distress flitted over the still fair face before him, but the old lady quickly recovered her sweet placid dignity, and addressed him in a soft voice with rather imperfect articulation, which he attributed to the loss of her teeth.

"I look like some old love of hers, I suppose," thought Horace, as he took the place beside her, politely vacated by a young man who had been amusing her with his lively conversation a moment before, and found himself soon absorbed in the study of this fascinating old lady, listening with that gentle deference which always distinguished his manner to the aged, to every indistinct word she uttered in her sweet tremulous voice, and tracing a resemblance to the beautiful face in the other room, in the altered but graceful outlines before him. He found beauty still in the snow-white curls, once brown, that drooped over her temples, beauty in the dark arched

eyebrows, and bright, kindly eyes beaming behind the glimmer of her glasses, beauty in the delicate skin, fine even in its wrinkles, in the well-set head, the fair, faded cheek, the slender figure and small hands, and the perfect contour of her face, half concealed by the thick crimped frills of her cap and the great bow of white satin ribbon tied under her chin. He was sure she must have been in youth even more lovely than the artist had drawn her, more brilliant than the colors had depicted her, and he envied the old colonel who had lived in the proper time to woo and win this gracious creature.

He wondered if she had any female descendants who had inherited her charms, and his eyes wandered up and down the room in search of a younger copy of the lineaments he so much admired, but no such appeared. Handsome, dark-eyed belles, blue-eyed and fair-haired maidens, brown-tressed beauties in abundance appeared, but no successor to this ancestral loveliness, and he was sorry that his wandering look was interpreted by the too-attentive Ned as a sign of weariness, and that he was borne away to be presented to this fair cousin, and to talk to that, to promenade with one, and polka with another, and was finally honored with an introduction to the fair Emily herself, under all possible restrictions and beneath the eye of her watchful lover, but he felt no desire to disturb his friendship by any show of attention to his lady-love, who sat in the little boudoir, below the lovely picture, and faded, to his eyes, into insipidity and plainness before its delicate and sparkling beauty.

The evening was far spent before he was again able to approach the crimson chair that enthroned its relics, and it was long after that he succeeded in penetrating the throng around it. The romping children, with hands full of toys and sweetmeats, who made the vicinity quite dangerous some time before, had been brought up in succession to kiss her, and been borne, shouting, off to bed, but their places were more than filled by a laughing, jesting crowd, whose evident admiration justified his own opinion of the aged beauty. As he hovered on the edge of this merry group, vexed at his exclusion from their circle, and inability to understand the jest they enjoyed so much, he was electrified by hearing a sweet, clear laugh from the occupant of the chair, the very laugh that belonged to the joyous heroine of the picture, from which years could not take the music or the mirth.

His efforts to obtain a second *tête à tête*, or even to join in the conversation with her, were quite unavailing, but he could not be mistaken in thinking that she had repeatedly glanced at him with interest, and that she was pleased with the respect and admiration his face expressed. When at last, the latest there, the reluctant Ned was induced to come away, and they took their leave of their hosts, and made their *conge* to the crimson throne, Horace could not resist raising the still beautiful hand to his lips, with affectionate reverence that provoked a hearty laugh from the inconsiderate Ned, and even seemed to make a faint glow in grandma's wrinkled cheeks, but he strode away thinking how that little hand had seemed to tremble and falter in his hold.

"What a beautiful little coquette she must have been!" he exclaimed, and Ned woke all the echoes with his shouts of laughter.

Horace thought him intoxicated. "You've had too much champagne," he said, and then resuming his meditations, "I must look like some old lover of hers, yes, that's it; she has never forgotten him!" and having, fortunately for the peace of the neighborhood, reached their hotel, went to his room quite regardless of the explosions of mirth that shook his comrade—whom he was accustomed to see under some form of excitement after a party—to dream of the septuagenarian beauty, and curse his fate in being born too late by two-score years and ten.

The next morning a brilliant sun shone in through the frost-work of the windows, and waked the indolent pair to rejoice over a fine fall of snow, which promised future sleighing, and had driven the houseful of cousins quite wild with anticipation before the friends arrived there for a morning call. The courtyard and grounds were scraped clean of snow, which had been liberally bestowed on the walls of the house, and on the wrappings of the few muffled figures that still moved about among the *debris* of the battle, from one of whom Ned immediately received the favor of a well-directed ball, which extinguished his moustache and nestled in his fur collar, to ooze out presently in damp discomfort on his glossy linen and new cravat. A loud shout from the attacking party greeted the successful shot, and "Kate, of course," thought Horace as they went in, glad that any mischief detained her from joining the family group during his visit.

They entered quietly without ringing, that the discomfited Ned might have an opportunity

to repair his toilet before encountering his cousins; and while he was still brushing and muttering, Horace stepped quietly into the open drawing-room, to spend his leisure examining the picture he had so much admired the night before, and criticise its loveliness by the glare of daylight. But he stopped on the threshold of the boudoir, to pass his hand over his eyes, and wonder if he still were dreaming at sight of what seemed the fair original herself, seated before it, the beautiful eyes fixed upon their prototypes, the arch lips curved in the same dimpled smile, the brown tresses drooping with as soft a grace, the pretty foot, the little hand, the elastic carriage, the exquisite figure, all there as if the ghost of that girlish loveliness still haunted the spot where its memory was so fairly preserved, but for the modern dress which gave it a new charm of life and reality in his admiring eyes.

He could have lingered forever watching the varying play of expression on that fair face, the shifting light in her eyes, the flitting dimples and blushes on her cheek, the lashes that drooped, and the lips that smiled, but the spell was broken by the creak of Ned's new boots approaching, and the living picture sprang up and confronted the intruders with a chilling dignity, before which Horace stood abashed, while the cooler Ned felt it not at all.

"My cousin, Mr. Derwent," he kindly explained. "Never mind being caught, child," condescendingly to the young lady, "you look very well in that wrapper, quite like the picture, eh, Horace? and you will have plenty of time to change it, for we shall stay all the morning. Entertain Mr. Derwent now, while I find the rest; you can talk about the portrait, he is quite wild on the subject. Ah, and by the by, how's grandma?" and with a loud and long laugh Mr. Ned quitted the room in search of his cousins, and left the new acquaintances together.

The young lady was evidently very much embarrassed and was blushing beautifully, the roses of her cheeks grew momentarily deeper under the shade of the fringed lashes, which the admiring Horace watched in sublime oblivion of politeness, till he saw symptoms of their rising, and hurried into speech.

"I hope we shall see your grandmother, this morning," he observed.

The beauty, in great confusion, was understood to murmur something about "indisposition," but her arch lips were beginning to quiver with a smile, and her eyes to sparkle with mischievous light. Determined to en-

courage these signs of returning confidence, Horace continued—

"I am sorry to hear that she is indisposed. I trust nothing serious?"

"A slight cold," said the young lady, faintly; "over-exertion."

"Ah, yes, very natural, though she looks too young still to be easily affected by such causes, in spite of the delicacy of her appearance. One cannot think of her as really aged; it seems impossible that a creature so beautiful should fade, nor has she faded as yet. To me, that elastic loveliness, so lightly touched by Time, is rendered sacred by a newer and rarer charm; 'age cannot wither her' indeed, but is a fresh baptism of beauty."

He waited for an answer, but the young lady seemed still struggling with her confusion, and unable to speak, and he felt obliged to go on, though afraid of making some blunder in his hurry of ideas.

"Pardon me, Miss Holland, ['she must be Miss Holland, being Ned's cousin, they are nearly all Holland's except that Kate'] but that picture," indicating the one he admired, "I was told last evening that it was your grandmother's portrait, taken in early life; it might be yourself; the resemblance is wonderful. You were not present last evening, I think, for I looked anxiously, I assure you, among Mrs. Holland's descendants to find the inheritor of her grace and beauty, but I was unsuccessful; you were not there? I could not have forgotten——"

In Congressional parlance, he "paused for a reply," but none came. The young girl sat perfectly silent, with downcast eyes, and blushing cheeks, before him, and answered only by the varying color and expression of her countenance, so lovely in her timidity and confusion that he could not but look and admire. "A most delicate and modest little creature," he thought, "one could hardly have expected with that coquettish face and form, this awkward, no, this graceful embarrassment. Most fortunate conjunction of shyness with such bewitching beauty, enabling me to use my eyes without the rebuke of a look from hers!" and with this philosophical conclusion the enchanted Horace fell to the contemplation of the *tableau vivant* which fortune had placed before him, with a thankful heart, and no thought of fatigue, till his friend returned with a troop of laughing girls, and the relieved beauty made her escape in the tumult that followed.

But he was not awakened from his dream

when its object had disappeared; he was absent, *distract*, stupid, and not even his faultless dress and manner, his handsome face and figure could save him from the charge of being a bore, preferred against him by a jury of young critics, who sat in judgment upon him after he left the house. He had made one inquiry after "grandma" to be sure, but even that joke he must utter as if it were the soberest earnest, and had prosecuted his inquiries after her health with mock solemnity that was more like real. He had remained, too, with his eyes mostly fixed upon "grandma's" portrait, which was very pretty no doubt, but not generally considered by persons of his age and sex as better worth looking at than her young grand-daughters, and with absurd affectation had retired from the room with his face towards it, and cast back a last glance as he passed under the arch of the door. Ned found him no better when they returned to their hotel, and was glad that a furious snow storm, which darkened the air all the afternoon, gave him an excuse for sleeping till it was time to dress for dinner, and escaping the society of his abstracted companion, who braving wind and tempest set out upon a solitary walk. An hour later, the young ladies collected in the parlors of Mr. James Holland's house, dropping their various pretences of occupation, rushed to the windows to see a little boy bringing a bouquet, and arrived in the hall just in time to hear him say repeatedly to the waiter, "No, not for any of the young ladies, I tell you. For the old lady; Mr. Ned's grandmother, the gentleman said. 'For Mrs. Colonel Holland, with Mr. Derwent's respects.' It's on the card Miss Kate."

The girls returned to the parlor with their prize, laughing, but half envious of the fair recipient, who regarded it with looks compounded of gratification and revenge. She had half a mind to burn it but had not the heart, it was such a beautiful bouquet when taken from its wrappings, so fragrant, fresh and pure; yet she wished she had sent it back at once, with, or without an indignant message. It was so audacious of the fellow to send it! so mean of Ned to let him do it! she wondered how long he had guessed grandma's identity. Ned could never keep a secret, and had probably told him at once, and she was a subject for their joint mirth! She should have no peace now, during her visit; the mortifications had already begun with this morning's call, and the importunate staring and quizzing she had undergone, fol-

lowed by this insult and the indignant Kate could have trampled the flowers under her avenging slippers. But their fragrant loveliness, or the admiration of her cousins, finally prevailed, and it was with considerable complacency that she bore them up to her room and deposited them on the little light stand by her pillow, to waft odors of Paradise through her dreams. If the donor could have seen the flowers he sent to enliven the sick chamber of the aged matron made welcome to Kate's virgin bower, praised by her rosy lips, and held in her white hands while she buried her lovely face in their perfumed petals, as sweet a blossom as any there, perhaps this pleasing sight would have restored the temper of his nerves, and enabled him to hear with more flattering attention the plans of the gallant Ned, who awoke "like a giant refreshed with wine," and arranged a sighing party as he made his toilette.

The two gentlemen returned to dine at the Holland mansion, where a large party was assembled, which however, lacked the pleasantest characteristics of the night before. The children were banished, to leave more room for the elders. Grandma's velvet chair was vacant, and her youthful likeness, the beautiful girl whom Horace had first seen in the morning, seemed to inherit also her honors and admirers, but her painful shyness with himself was exchanged for a hauteur and reserve that he could not understand. She was his neighbor at dinner, with an indignant color burning on her cheeks, and a protest in her averted eyes, against the incomprehensible jokes Ned was constantly publishing at her other hand, and which she would not answer by a word. Her manner to her escort was both fearful and defiant, and Horace tried, with a patience and gentleness of courtesy almost irresistible, to win her from her coldness, to confidence and ease. He watched the rapid changes of her face and altered his conversation to suit it, as aptly as the mariner trims his sails or steers his course by the aspect of the sky; brilliant, pleasant, sensible, she could not but own his power—could not but feel that a master-hand skilfully disposed the topics he touched upon for her amusement, could not but be won against her will to admiration and respect, and submit to the influence of a more genial temper and a sweeter mood than her own.

Smiles were softening her lips, and pleasure was lighting up her face before they left the table, but her evil genius, Ned, whispered a

witticism in her ear, a laughing bevy of cousins surrounded her as they reentered the parlors, and her repellant manner returned for the rest of the evening. When in the Christmas games they were thrown together, she was silent as death; when in the dancing her hand touched his, it was quickly withdrawn; and when he approached her to ask for "Miss Holland's next waltz," he received from her a brusque excuse, and from her devoted attendant a polite correction.

"Not Miss Holland, sir," said Charley Harrington, who was another of the "extensive family connection." "Miss Lovering, I presume you mean; come Kate, our polka."

"I knew there was an antipathy between us," said Horace to himself, as he turned away and tried to think he felt it.

Until, in solitude and quiet he had reviewed the scenes and events of the past few hours, and analyzed the sudden feeling that had sprung up in his breast, and bent his will, his pride, his prejudice, like reeds, before this stronger growth of a day. Until he had recalled her strange coldness and perversity, her unreasonable petulance and prejudice, the happy change that followed her shyness, her aversion and her fear, her brightened eyes and deeper color, and nervous consciousness of his presence, all parts of a riddle hard to read, but bearing as close a relation to each other as the two fair faces he remembered with almost equal tenderness, one beautiful in age, and one in youth, and both forever dear. In dreams they seemed to exchange identity; it was the grandma's hand that lay so coldly in his own, the girl's that thrilled beneath his touch; the aged eyes were averted, perhaps, but the brighter ones of youth looked at him kindly, and the strange flush that had reddened the matron's wrinkled cheek was a blush of awakening interest, a glow of sweet confession on the younger face. Such dreams—all dreams are idle, vague and vain, practical people say so, and I accept the dictum in unquestioning humility, but I think they are hardly so foolish or so useless as these persons aver, or they would not have been granted by a higher Intelligence to ours. Strange glimpses of another world, not past, present or to come, but "the world that ought to be;" where improbable things are easy of belief, and impossibilities are constantly coming to pass; where crooked paths grow straight, and Gordian knots are cut by the simple laying of a weary head upon a homely pillow, in which we are fair or fine, rich or great, wise

or worshipped, according to our wish, and have temples of fame and airy castles, spring up far more quickly than Aladdin's palace, and happier than he—[for in Dreamland there is nothing unattainable]—we may ask for the roc's egg and get it. Dear Paradise of absurdities and incongruities, from which we are summoned by a word or a touch, in the heights of prosperity or the depths of distress, thou art not so unlike the world we inhabit by day, that we should disdain to visit thee by night, or thy dreams that refresh the weary mind as sleep the weary body, more futile than the "waking visions" from which Death calls us all away at last! This is a long moral, but it explains why my hero awoke in tolerable spirits and went sleighing.

There is little comfort for lovers in those many-seated "omnibus" sleighs ["may Eros forget him who invented them!"] thought Ned, as he took an exile's place, half-a-square from Emily], and as little in depositing therein those indistinguishable bundles of wool and fur, clad as for an Arcté expedition, as nearly alike to the common view, as Pharaoh's mummies in their layers of cloth, and about as incapable of conversation. Yet the watchful Horace, inspired by love, thought he knew which bale of shawls contained at its core the heart he sought to win; which fur mitten covered the hand he aspired to gain; and which of those brown *bârége* veils hid the bright eyes and blushing cheeks, the deep dimples and glossy curls of the lady of his dreams. He fancied, too, that this muffled figure leaned less heavily on his arm, accepted his assistance less readily, and turned from him more quickly than the rest, and at the ball and supper which followed, had ample proof of her studied avoidance and neglect. But the wilful girl found in him a will and courage stronger than her own, a patience and perseverance that compelled her respect, a sweetness and gentleness of temper that subdued and scattered her chilling discontent. So there were sometimes moments of sunshine that made amends, to *one* at least, for hours of coldness, and but for the bouquets and daily messages of compliment and inquiry to grandma, which kept Kate in a fever of anger and mortification at being quizzed, there might have been more. But she would not speak to her cousin Ned, and would not hear a word on the subject from any one else, so the task Horace attempted was like Penelope's, who unravelled at night what she wrought in the day.

These alternations brought him to New Year's Eve, and its accompanying resolutions; he would go away before his feelings were further enlisted in a hopeless cause. It was already hard enough to decide on forgetting the lovely girl who could be so bewitching to others, so repulsive to him; he would trust himself no longer in her presence, but go where her varying moods could no more affect his happiness.

He joined the well-known party in the Hollands' drawing-room, and was glad to see that the crimson chair was again filled, and went forward to pay his respects to the well-known figure within it. It was indeed grandma, released by the baby's convalescence at last, to join the family gathering, and who, with her hand fast locked in that of her favorite—whose strange flutter of spirits she could not comprehend—received Mr. Derwent's compliments with her own gentle courtesy, but gave no sign of recognition.

Horace was puzzled; the dress, the attitude, the figure before him were all the same, he remembered, but the old lady in the chair looked twenty years older than the previous week. Could a few days' illness so have changed her? There was a mystery about it that he could not fathom.

"I am glad to see you are well enough to resume your accustomed place," he said.

Grandma looked astonished, but gently thanked the gentleman who took so kind an interest in her health.

"I trust you no longer feel any ill effects from your late indisposition," he continued.

"I have not been ill, sir," she answered, smiling, "but attending an invalid five-and-seventy years younger than myself, or I should have arrived before, and been present on Christmas eve, as is my usual custom."

"Do I understand you to say," cried Horace, bewildered, "that you were not present on that occasion? I thought—I was sure—"

He paused, for grandma was looking at the guilty cheeks of her pretty grand-daughter, as if they contained the solution of the mystery.

"Is it possible, my dear," she slowly said, "that you have kept up a foolish deception so long, and misled this gentleman? I am afraid he will find it difficult to forgive either of us."

Poor Kate, amazed and aghast, as she realized his ignorance of grandma's identity, and innocence of intent to affront or tease her, was heard to stammer a faint apology; but Horace, with a stiff and stately bow, had turned away and left the room.

Five minutes after, as he stood in the little boudoir, taking a last look at the portrait, and resolving to leave its vicinity at once, a light hand lifted the silken curtains, and a timid touch fell upon his arm.

"I came to beg your pardon," faltered Kate.

"For what?" he sternly inquired.

"For deceiving you, sir," she answered, tremulously. "It seems you didn't know, but I thought you did, and were trying to mortify me. It was all my fault, but I am sure I never meant it. I hope you will forgive us."

"Nothing else?" asked Horace, keenly.

Nothing but a burst of tears which reduced him at once.

"Dear Miss Lovering," said he, quite melted, "you had a perfect right to enjoy your masquerade, and I was a fool not to see it before; but it is not that which hurts me now—your coldness—your aversion—"

"I was mistaken," murmured Kate.

"Is it possible that you see it in that light," cried the enraptured lover, "then I may hope to be more fortunate—to please you better in future?"

Dead silence; but the hand he took was not withdrawn.

"You must have seen," he softly whispered, "that the first sight of you made an impression upon me, which nothing can ever efface. Even under that venerable disguise, I felt your power and acknowledged your beauty, and would willingly have added half a century to my age to have been the contemporary of the fascinating old lady who so strangely won my heart."

"Yes, I know," said Kate, with returning sauciness, "that you fell in love with grandma."

"But she received my homage more kindly than the descendant for whom I deserted her."

"I thought," she retorted, "that you 'detested Kates.'"

"No, I adore them. So Ned has been betraying me? Did he tell you that I wished to enter the family? I will confess the whole, if you will listen and promise to absolve me afterwards."

The confession lasted an hour and a quarter, and ended in reconciling the two enemies. Horace did not go away next day, but remained till the Christmas festivities were over, and was invited to return next year as "one of the family." He won the Twelfth Night ring, and nobody was much surprised when he put it on Kate's white finger, or when grandma magnanimously offered to relinquish all claim on the conquest made in her name, and come to her rival's wedding.

How it Happened.

BY J. G. A.

The days of December, 1861, were growing darker and duller, as the last drawn breaths of the year grew feeble and short. Mary Watson, sitting by her fire alone on Christmas Eve, mused upon the probability—as who would not?—of her sitting by that same fire on Christmas Eve of December, 1862. Mary was an old maid.

Now there are many old maids, but not many are there like Mary Watson. For, first, she was perfectly contented. Moreover, she was always cheerful, social, and preëminently unselfish. Which last word we should all do well to ponder.

So, being thus unselfish, it was very natural that Mary's thoughts should wander from herself to her friends. And it happened, though she could hardly have told how, that in the midst of her cogitations, she was moved to take her little lamp, go up stairs, and draw out from an old trunk a package of dingy, yellow letters.

"How long they have been written," she said to herself, and her eyes rested upon them with a fond, half regretful look. She turned them over almost reverently. How differently she had handled them, when, years before, they came to her fresh and white, dropping into the current of her life with their precious burdens of gayety, and sentiment, and love. Mary looked at them till her spirit went back into the land of her youth, a land very radiant, very still and peaceful. How much of its radiance had drifted along with her years? How much of its peacefulness had, could be told by a glance at the unmistakably peaceful face. There are many quiet countenances, quiet from the very sluggishness of the spirit within, but Mary Watson's bore the impress of thought and feeling, deepened now by the letters that nestled in her hand, and as she went down stairs, and seated herself by the little stand to peruse them, there was a peculiar serenity in her face and very movements that never belong to common minds.

One by one the minutes ticked away, the little pile of letters at Mary's right hand grew higher and higher, and that in her lap proportionately decreased. Suddenly she drew a quick, startled breath, and bent curiously over a fair, white envelope. It had never been unsealed! She tore it open, the hand writing, yes, it was plainly that of her cousin, Elsie Watson's husband, Seth Willis, and the

date! There was no mistaking the evidence of her eyes, the date was eight years back, two months after the writer had laid under the melting snows of spring his young wife, and gone back to his desolate home with two sweet children.

"I am very lonely, cousin Mary," he wrote, "and I want my two only treasures with me, but more, I want that they should be taught as their sainted mother would have taught them. For her sake, Mary, for mine, and for theirs, will you take them to the old homestead, the home where I won her, my Elsie, and help them to grow up worthy of such a mother?"

Mary folded the letter with tears, collected her writing materials, and wrote:—

"I do not wonder now, cousin Seth, as I have these eight years, why, since Elsie was laid to sleep, you have not visited her childhood's home. And yet you should have known me better, should have known that I could not have disregarded the letter you wrote at that time. You will hardly believe that I have never seen it till to-night! I cannot account for the mistake by which it has been so long hidden. Elsie's children! O, how often have I longed to look into their faces, to see if I could trace her there! But I could not leave home, you know. I have travelled through much of sorrow since I saw you; my parents lie together in the churchyard, but the home that was first Elsie's, now mine, remains the same. The children do not need such care now as you asked me to give them, but at least, cousin Seth, for the sake of old memories, bring them to visit awhile at the old homestead with their mother's

"COUSIN MARY."

Seth Willis was not a demonstrative man, so it was not strange that when two days later, he received Mary's letter, he read it with little perceivable emotion. But it did seem rather strange to his little twelve-year old daughter, that he should afterwards sit and gaze into the bright coal fire so long and steadily.

She came up finally, and rested her hand on his shoulder, from which position she was almost immediately drawn to a seat on his knee.

"Well, Elsie," he said, after she was fairly settled.

"Well, father!" she answered, brightly.

"I thought my little daughter wanted to ask some favor."

"Oh, no," she said, "I was only wondering what you was thinking of!"

Mr. Willis pushed back the hair softly from her sweet, bright face, but did not tell her!

"Sakes alive!" exclaimed Mrs. Peters, the widow who "stayed" with Mary Watson, ostensibly to keep her company, but in reality because this was Mary's delicate way of giving a home to the feeble, garrulous old lady, "if there aint a gentleman, nice lookin' tew, a comin' right up to the front door! I'll be beat, Mary, if 'taint your cousin, Elsie Watson's husband, that was!"

With which comprehensive information, Mrs. Peters suddenly remembering that this was New Year's Evening, and certain extra delicacies were in course of preparation for tea, disappeared, leaving Mary to receive her visitor alone. It was never known, except to the parties themselves, how they met after those years of silence, but it was "a thing to be remarked," Mrs. Peters said, that Mr. Willis seemed more "gentle-like" than she had known him before his wife died. She repeated this to Mary, after their guest had been shown to the "spare chamber" for the night. Mary only opened her eyes at her, and fell to musing.

It was never known, we said, how they met, but it is certain that two mornings later, before they parted, Mr. Willis detained Mary in the parlor some hours, chatting upon old themes of interest. In the midst of this desultory talk, he left his seat, and went up to Mary's easy-chair, leaning on its wide back, yet so he might look in her countenance. Then he broke out impulsively—

"I have come to the conclusion, Mary, that Elsie and Mattie ought to have just the care and counsel now that you would have given them years ago. Could you consent to assume the charge of them now, for a sufficient compensation?"

There was a slight roguish twinkle in his fine eyes, as they met Mary's. But she only wondered!

"If they were little children," she answered, humbly. "But they will be young ladies soon."

"If that is your only objection," he said, bending nearer, "you shall have the children! But it must be on one condition!"

"Well," she said, expectantly.

"That you shall take me, too!"

Mary looked up, and down. Her blush was painful. But it was plain she had no objections to offer!

And this was how it happened that on Christmas Eve of 1862, Mary Watson's seat by her fire was vacant, and Mary Willis sat by a much more cheerful one. Perhaps—Mary thought it was partly that—it was because its light fell upon the faces of her husband and his two fair children.

Lizzie Greene.

BY LUCY N. GODFREY.

Lizzie Greene is no creation of my fancy, but an intelligent, noble hearted New England girl—my friend. At mention of her name, my memory unrolls a bright, long panorama of pleasant pictures, of which one limited article could scarce allow you, my readers, a glimpse. Among the first are many sweet rural scenes you would love to linger over. Little girls, ranging over orchard and meadow, occasionally loitering for hours by the side of the broad, blue river, to skip the flat stones, or watch the circling vibrations from some heavy boulder they have with difficulty cast into the stream. Then again you would see those same little girls swinging under the crooked limbed old apple-tree, or enjoying to the utmost of their capacity a ride upon the river in the boat of some indulgent friend. Lizzie's early home was a very pleasant island farm. The bridge alone separated it from the village where I lived, and some of my brightest holidays were spent with her and our sisters, in her father's barn, orchard or meadow, or in our favorite haunts by the river. I find it very pleasant to recall those sunny holidays, when we were so merry and so wholly free in our roamings. Scarcely less delightful are the very many remembrances of our youthful intercourse, when cloudy skies confined us within doors, or duty held us to the school-house or grounds.

But I must not linger over these bright, crowding recollections, for our life-paths have somewhat diverged since the days when we played the same games and conned the same lessons, though our friendship has never known a jar of discord. Sometimes for months together we have not met, and when we have again clasped hands, there has been more than childish heart-warmth in our glad grasps.

We have been content that it should be so, because we so fully realized that in doing those duties which were nearest, we might best fit our souls for that blessed freedom, when, bursting beyond the domain of weakness and pain, they shall so expand that they shall recognize in their glad depths ample room for all the old and cherished ties which were crowded aside unmarred by later heart-claims, as well as for these later loves, and for the infinite number of holy friendships we hope to form among the "just made perfect" who passed away before our time.

Lizzie was the eldest of three daughters.

Her mother, a thrifty, stirring housewife, was wont to depend upon Lizzie for the care of her younger sisters when she was but a little child herself. As she grew older, she was called on to take many a step to lighten her mother's labor. Then, as the years rolled on, Hattie, her next younger sister, was called on to assist in household duties, but in some way it happened that no passing years brought duties to Milly, the youngest of the sisters. She was her father's pet and plaything, and many a prank of hers was laughed over which would have met severe reproof had it been charged to either of her sisters, when they were of the same age. Mrs. Greene was quite as indulgent to Milly as was her husband, and thus she was growing up a wilful and spoiled child. She was no favorite at school, and many were the amusements of which Lizzie and Hattie were deprived, because they could not go without Milly, and she was so frequent a marplot, that she met few welcomes except when she chanced to be in a gracious mood, and then she was very winning.

Even in those childish days, Lizzie's self-denying love for, and patience with her petulant sister, were beautiful. How sadly she would look, when some one of her companions would exclaim—

"Take her home, if she will be so hateful!"

And how very patiently she would coax and soothe, or sometimes hire the wilful, naughty child, with her carefully stored childish treasures. Lizzie little realized how those hours of annoyance were maturing and strengthening her better nature. Neither did her young companions then analyze the respect they felt for Lizzie, nor did they know why they so often stopped to wait for both when they had threatened to leave them, if Lizzie would not come and let her sister stay alone to come to her senses.

Thus their childhood passed, the two elder fast coming forwards into earnest, self-reliant maidenhood, the youngest still petulant and sullen, if everything was not arranged according to her sometimes most unreasonable wishes. If Lizzie or Hattie ventured to refuse to yield to her, her triumphant—"I'll tell Pa, and you will wish you had!" usually brought them to her terms.

The time for Lizzie to leave school came. Our class had almost unanimously resolved to become teachers. We had each encouraged the bright day dreams of future usefulness in the hearts of our companions, and had our own enthusiastic plans for a good influence over

the rising generation, strengthened by such intercourse. Lizzie was eager to begin the good work she was confident she could do. None could have a fairer prospect of usefulness in her chosen field of action than herself, for to her excellent scholarship was added the patience and tact in managing refractory urchins, that Milly had involuntarily taught her. Lizzie was very successful as a teacher. Parents and pupils were pleased, and she knew that she could easily find pleasant employment for the summer seasons; but it was the custom in most schools to retain the services of gentlemen for the winter terms, and thus young girls, who had no homes where they could be supported during two-thirds of the year, were mostly excluded from the vocation.

Lizzie's father was now a poor man. Two or three years before he had removed from the pleasant island home which was so endeared to himself and family, and at present they occupied a little cottage at the extreme opposite end of the village, of which he had a deed, though it was mortgaged for nearly its value. He was now trying to pay off this mortgage, but progressed very slowly, as his daily wages were scarcely more than sufficient for the support of his family. Lizzie knew this, and her independent spirit made her scorn to increase her father's toil. It must have cost her some sad hours to relinquish all those bright dreams of usefulness as a teacher, but the decision was bravely made, and very soon her cheerful face was seen day after day in the sewing-room of Miss L——, our fashionable dress-maker. The same quickness of apprehension which had made her among the first at school, helped her now, and ere long the nicest and most difficult pieces of work were entrusted to her skilful fingers.

When she had finished her trade, she preferred going from house to house, by the day, to the routine and companionship of shop life. She found no difficulty in getting all the work she wanted, with better, as well as more constant wages than she could have commanded as a teacher of public schools. She did not give up mental culture as she sought manual skill. After her hours of toil, came time each evening for reading. Among her patrons were several wealthy and intelligent ladies, who appreciated Lizzie, and not only gave her access to their libraries, but found pleasure in conversing with her of their reading and observation.

But a cloud came over her home. Her

mother died, and her father and sisters, looking to her for comfort under the heavy trial, she thrust her own deep grief into the depths of her heart, as she sought to make their home a cheerful one once more. She could not resume her daily labor, for her mother's cares fell on her, as she insisted that Hattie should attend school another year. Three days in each week she devoted to home cares, while the remaining three she plied her needle as before.

Thus a year passed. At its close their father also laid aside life with its burdens, and the three sisters were left alone in the world. Lizzie determined that Hattie, who was now competent to teach, should have an opportunity to realize her own early dreams as a teacher, and that she might do so, she resolved to keep a home ready to welcome her, till she should win permanent employment. Their cottage was only partly paid for, but with her strong will she thought she could compass the remainder, as well as support herself and Milly, and assist Hattie. She resumed her sewing for six days in the week, attending to their light household duties, and their own sewing, morning and evening, when Hattie was away, and the petted Milly did not choose to assist her. After a couple of summers of teaching, Hattie found pleasant employment in a school where they were glad to retain her the year round, except quarterly vacations. Lizzie rejoiced, and her friends with her, for, though she had worked constantly, she had as yet made slow progress in paying that mortgage.

But a heavier call than ever was now made upon her purse; the wilful Milly unquestionably had a decided artistic talent. How proud Lizzie was of the pictures she had executed under the eye of her village teacher; but Milly was not satisfied. Nobody in this little town knew anything, she was constantly ready to assert, as she urged her petition to be sent to a School of Design in Boston. Poor Lizzie's heart plead warmly for the indulgence of her pet, but it would cost so much! Board, tuition, extra clothing—could she earn it all? It was no wonder she hesitated before assuming the heavy burden, for balancing her warm heart, Lizzie had a prudent head. She thought of the risk of illness for herself, or either of her sisters; but she would not allow herself to dwell upon any objections. Milly would never be good for anything if her talents could not be cultivated, she was sure, therefore she would not listen to those who told her that the

spoiled child, whose pictures they had no eyes to appreciate, would never have patience to accomplish anything if she had ever so much skill. Lizzie knew that Milly had been patient upon those pictures as upon nothing else, and she had sufficient faith in her talent to determine to try her for a half year. Milly, probably for the first time in her life, did not take the indulgence as a matter of course, and her expressions of gratitude gladdened and strengthened Lizzie's loving heart, as with busy, skillful fingers she completed the necessary outfit. The young girl's heart was softened too, so that, as she half idled over the sewing she could not take an interest in, she listened with unusual deference to her sister's counsel, and determined that she would improve the time of her absence. A little homesickness at being for the first time domesticated with those who did not acknowledge her as a superior, and the kind letters of her sisters deepened the good impression, so that Lizzie was gladdened by the earnest tone of her letters, which showed her wish to improve.

Lizzie rented the cottage for the half year, and took lodgings with a friend, but when vacation time came, she re-opened it to welcome her sisters, and so strong was her love of home that in the following years, when her sisters could only be with her at intervals, she kept her house in order, and spent her Sabbaths there usually. When Lizzie saw how rapidly Milly had improved during her six months' absence, she could not think of depriving her of farther means of improvement. Pride in her young sister's talents was now added to the unconscious deference which had been a habit from childhood, and she very readily promised her that she would help her fit herself to teach her favorite art.

But let us hasten forward to that romance of Lizzie's life which has brought her name frequently into drawing-rooms. More than one of her lady patrons like to tell their friends the story of this devoted sister, for they recognize her as a real heroine.

It was near the close of Milly's first year in Boston that Lizzie met with James B——. Mutual admiration and respect were soon followed by love. Now came the May-time of Lizzie's life. The blossoms of hope were thick on every side, while it was a constantly present delight to live in the sunshine of this new love. It was a joy to see and sympathize in Lizzie's happiness. She had always been cheerful, sometimes merry; but now her

whole nature was quickened into activity, as it rapidly expanded beneath the genial influence of this new passion. I well remember meeting Lizzie and her lover one sunny Sabbath morning, as we all walked to our different places of worship. They were upon the opposite side of the street, and I called the attention of my husband to Lizzie's face as a bright illustration of the fact that joy is a great beautifier. I never saw her look so beautiful before, for upon every lineament of her fair face happiness had set its seal.

This was the last time I ever saw Lizzie and James together, and ere long I noticed a shade of anxiety on her brow, but she was not one to seek human sympathy in the hour of trial. Her fancy had invested her lover with every noble, manly quality, but only too soon for her happiness she found that he could never realize her high ideal. After their engagement, she was eager to learn of his relatives, for she was ready to love them warmly for his sake, even as she expected he would esteem her precious sisters, because they were so dear to her. James Bond was a selfish man; his parents, brothers and sisters were good enough, he supposed, probably a little better because they were related to him, but he had very little filial or fraternal affection. At first he felt somewhat flattered by Lizzie's earnest inquiries concerning his family, but when she spoke of her sisters as claimants for his affection, he could not conceal his impatience. He talked to Lizzie of his love for her, assuring her that she was all the world to him. Was it wonderful that his passionate declarations of love did not give her the satisfaction they had done, before she suspected the heart she occupied was a small one? She knew that she did not love her sisters less, because she loved him more. She might have told him what strength and swiftness in toil her inspiring love for him had already given her, but she neither saw herself or him as they were. She could not tear her idol down, and so she blamed herself after meeting him, assuring herself that he must have misunderstood her, else he never would have said the words which wounded her so keenly. She did not wish him to marry the family, nor had she any thought of joining with her sisters in forming an interest opposed to his. The idea of opposition to his interest was preposterous to her; but surely she might assist Milly before her marriage, without offending him, and they could very well delay their union till Milly should have completed her desired course of

struction. James did not agree with her, however; ere long he began to urge her to name an early wedding day, and then they came to an understanding. Lizzie's promise was sacred to her. She was yielding as wax where only her own happiness was concerned, but firm as a rock when another's depended on her decision. She had promised to assist her sister, and Milly depended on her promise. It was all in vain that James urged that Milly was quite old enough now to depend upon her own exertions. He could see no reason in Lizzie's doing so much more for her sisters than had been done for her; at all events, if she loved him she would prefer him to sisters, and he might as well teach her to begin with, that he did not want a wife who would set up her will in opposition to his. Acting upon some such thought, he one evening told her that she might take her choice, give up all thought of doing more for her sisters, unless they should be sick, in which case he would not wish her to see them need her help, and hasten her preparations for their marriage, or cancel her engagement with him. At first she could not believe him in earnest, but, when she saw that he meant all he said, her maidenly pride came to her aid, and she almost calmly told him that if he had no deeper love for her than his words implied, it was far better that they should separate now. She had told him her wishes and her plans, but she had not yet given him power to thwart them all. Her spirited response surprised him very much, and he answered harshly, more harshly than he meant, so that neither cared to prolong the interview. They parted sadly, he saying, as he left:—

"If you should alter your decision, Lizzie, with any reasonable time, I shall be glad to forget all this trouble."

Lizzie watched him as he very slowly walked away. Impulse bade her call him back, and promise anything he might ask, rather than lose the love which had become a necessity to her; but thoughts of Milly kept her silent. She went to her room to lay this new trial before her Almighty Father, and gain strength to bear it in His infinite sympathy and love. It was a bitter, bitter hour, but the strength she sought came to her. Her heart found excuses for James in his early experience, but she knew that his love was not for her, for there could never be that sympathy between them which was necessary to her ideal of marriage. Henceforth her Saviour should be to her lover and friend, and from

Him would she gain strength to increase the happiness of all about her.

It was a great help to her, that her sisters were coming home soon, for she made preparations to welcome them with her accustomed zest, while she determined that not even her sisters should know how heavy a trial had been appointed unto her. They came, and she exerted herself to make their visit a pleasant one, with her usual care refitting Milly's wardrobe. A year later, Hattie took one of our village schools, where she could have employment through the year, and board with Lizzie. Then Milly graduated, and, through the influence of her teachers, received an excellent offer of a situation as teacher of her art in a Southern Seminary. Here was the glad fruition of Lizzie's labor! No one would dare call Milly good for nothing now; how lady-like she had become during these later years! Lizzie was proud of her, as well she might be, and no kingly palace has more highly prized decorations than now adorn the walls of their cottage.

Very pleasant was the intercourse of the sisters as they chatted and sewed. Milly was full of hopefulness; the salary which had been offered her, seemed very large to her, for she had been little accustomed to seeing money aggregated except in the much smaller sums which had been made so profitable in her sister's household economy. They would not need to pinch the next time they fitted her out, she said, and she was ready to promise a deal of assistance towards paying the mortgage. Lizzie was not sanguine in her expectations of help from Milly, for she knew too well that ways to spend a much larger salary would not require seeking, and she knew also that it was not in the nature of her petted sister to deny herself any present pleasure, when she had the means of gratifying herself in her power; but it was a great deal towards her profit that Milly should support herself. Now she was free to work towards paying for the house, and, Hattie assisting her, they soon had the satisfaction of knowing that their home was entirely their own. There came frequent, pleasant, chatty letters from Milly in her sunny home. Lizzie and Hattie rejoiced and heartily sympathized in her happiness, and were very contented with their own way of life. A few choice friends loved and appreciated them, and were frequently welcomed to their home of an evening, while they were universally respected. Sometimes a fellow teacher of Hattie's boarded with them, but the

great events of their lives were Milly's summer visits. When her holidays came, she hastened home to rest, be petted, and make her sisters very happy, by simply being happy herself.

Three years ago, there was an unusual stir in the little cottage as the time for Milly's arrival approached, for she had written them enthusiastic accounts of the brother she was going to bring them, and the dear little nephew and niece who would claim their love. Ah, how joyously Lizzie and Hattie welcomed them all. They were very much pleased with Milly's husband, and he has since been as a kind brother to them, while Clarence and Minnie, the sweet children a first wife left to him, are like sunbeams in their home. Lizzie was gratified when Mr. D——, having employment offered him, decided to make our village his permanent home. Of course, they could not think of forming two families, for Lizzie's ready tact at management and skill in all handiwork made her, and Hattie too, quite as necessary to Milly's comfort as was her love and companionship to their happiness.

Now that they were so pleasantly established under one roof, and Lizzie had no need to work more than she should choose, the disease, from which she had, for a year or two, been trying to free herself, seized her most relentlessly. Days and nights of torturing neuralgic pain well nigh prostrated her; yet, in her hours of comparative ease, she sought the happiness of those about her, still retaining the care of the household, and trying to teach housewifery to Milly, who, though utterly incompetent to depend on herself now, wished to learn so earnestly, that she was an apt scholar.

I met Lizzie again one Sabbath-morning as we walked to church, about ten years after I had seen *happiness* so plainly marked upon her brow. A stranger would have been struck by her appearance—how much more was I, who knew how full of self-sacrifice her whole life had been. It was one of those golden October days, the holidays of the year, when all the air seems glorified. As she walked feebly, leaning upon the arm of her brother-in-law, upon the bright autumn leaves, while the reflected, golden sunlight flooded her pallid cheek and brow, her face struck me as a sweet and holy poem would have done. Instantaneously there flashed through my thoughts a brighter record of all her unselfishness and self-devotion, than could have been translated into earthly words. I felt that now, as in the

time of our Saviour, there are two classes in the world—shading into each other it is true, meeting, mingling, and even thrown by circumstances each partly in the place of the other, yet two classes still—the one, ever self-denying, anxious to do for others and happy in all such labor—the other, willing to be served, and naturally expecting more of service than it gives. Seeing, in Lizzie's pale, bright face, that now as then *the blessing falls upon those who minister*, I needed no sermon to make that day's memory sacred to me. I no longer read there of mere earthly happiness, but of far better than that—Peace, “that peace which the world neither giveth or taketh away.”

I called upon Lizzie soon after, and urged her to leave all care to her sisters, and devote her time to getting well. She was very cheerful, and had a deal of confidence in the physician whom she had called, but as for dropping all care, it was simply impossible for her at present. Milly, whom we must now call Mrs. D——, was very lady-like still, and better than that, she had grown womanly, good and lovable. She was anxious about Lizzie, and now regretted her inefficiency in practical affairs, since she could do so much less than she wished for her sister's comfort. I was, as ever, delighted with the children, who were very intelligent and sprightly. Little blue-eyed Minnie was like a little fairy, very delicate and precocious, but Lizzie was sure that cold water and our northern clime would make her as strong and vigorous as her black-eyed brother.

Lizzie had not, as I feared, accomplished her work on earth. During that winter she suffered very much, but with the returning spring came the health and strength which she had learned to prize at their true value.

Now, if I were writing a fancy sketch, I should bring forward a noble looking man, and after endowing him with all manly graces, permit him to wed my heroine. Lizzie's strong affections and domestic tastes would make her a very happy wife, while none who have seen how cheerfully and faithfully she has performed every duty to others, can doubt but that she would be the joy and pride of a worthy husband. However, I suspect that said noble young man has gone to the war, without recognizing the opportunity for increasing the happiness of two, and if he never should return, as he certainly is not particularly expected, Lizzie's happiness is safe. The memory of the love of her youth is precious to

her, and she rejoiced that it enlarged her power of sympathizing with others.

About a year ago she pronounced her pet sister, Mrs. D——, competent to keep house, and since that time she and Hattie have been the boarders, while Mrs. D—— has presided with matronly grace and dignity over their happy household, which is already so large that they have seen fit to rent the cottage, and hire a large and pleasant dwelling upon the same street. Mrs. D—— has a little son of her own, of which Lizzie assumes a deal of care, thinking that she loves it just as well as she could if it were her own; while the other two children are perfectly careless as to asking a favor, whether it be of mother or auntie Lizzie, as they find both alike indulgent.

Pages from a Pleasant Book.

The freshest, raciest, pleasantest book of the season is "Country Living and Country Thinking," by Gail Hamilton, from which we made an extract in the December number. We now offer our readers a few more pages, and advise them to buy the volume. It is from the press of Ticknor & Fields, Boston, and is of faultless typography.

MY BIRDS.

Strictly speaking, I haven't any,—only an old cage thrust away up garret under the eaves,—nor, in fact, do I want any. Do not, however, for a moment suppose that I indulge in a sentimental compassion for caged birds, for I don't. I consider such a thing entirely uncalled for, and misplaced. I have no doubt that a canary-bird, with a cup of seed and a glass of water, finds every aspiration of his soul satisfied. A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things. He was born and bred in a cage, and, so far from being discontented with a restraint of which he is not conscious, freedom would bewilder him and bring him to grief. But, though I do not take into account the bird's feelings, I do mind my own; and a prisoned bird always gives me a cramped, asthmatic sensation, if I know what cramp and asthma are, which I don't.

My birds, the birds that furnish my right to that possessive pronoun, are the little darlings which this moment brighten the cold, damp, clammy spring earth with their flutter and chirp and song,—little, happy-hearted,

hollow-boned braves, who dare untimely frosts, and the whirling snow-wreaths which winter, forced to leave, flings spitefully behind him,—during the long, cold, dismal rains which chill to the heart this sweet May month,—merry messengers of the storm-king, bearing the olive-leaf of peace; twittering prophecies of summer; tender little bars struck off from the music of the spheres; faint, sweet echoes, in their wooing and winning, their prudence and painstaking, their tender protection and assiduous provision, of the strong, careful, passionate, loving humanity that swells and surges beneath them.

I love birds; I do not mind if it is nothing but a hawk or a crow, or a sooty little chimney-swallow. I even like chickens till they become hens and human. I cannot look with indifference upon turkeys standing out forlorn in the rain, too senseless to think of going in for shelter, and so taking it helplessly, with rounded backs, drooping heads, dripping feathers, and long, bare, red, miserable legs, quite too wretched to be ridiculous. I dote on goslings,—little soft, yellow, downy, awkward things, waddling around with the utmost self-complacency, landing on their backs every third step, and kicking spasmodically till they are set right side up with care, when they resume their waddle and their self-complacency as if nothing in the world had happened. The only fault one can find with them is, that they will grow up; and goslings grown up are nothing but geese, with their *naïveté* degenerated into stupidity, their awkwardness crystallized into vulgarity, and their tempers unspeakably bad. But the little birds that sing to me from the apple-trees, and hop about on the sunny southern slope, are not of these. Purer blood runs through finer veins. Golden robins, a fiery flash of splendor, gleam in the long grass, and put the dandelions to shame. There are magnificent bluebirds, with their pale, unwinching intensity of color; and homely little redbreasts, which we all called robins when we were young, and invested with the sanctity of that sweet, ancestral pity which has given them a name in our memory and a place in our hearts, till somebody must needs flare up, and proclaim that they are nothing but thrushes! As if this world were in a general way such an Elysium that people can afford to make themselves unnecessarily disagreeable. If there is any one thing more than another that is an unmitigated abomination and bore, it is those persons who are always

setting you right; who find their delight in pricking your little silk balloons of illusion with their detestable pins of facts; who are always bringing their statistics to bear upon your enthusiasms; who go round with a yardstick and a quart-measure to give you the cubic contents of your rapture, demonstrating to a logical certainty that you need not have been rapt at all; proving by the forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid that spirits disembodied cannot have any influence upon spirits embodied; setting up that there isn't any Maelstrom and never was,—that the Aurora Borealis is a common cloud reflecting the sunlight, and turning the terrible ocean-waves that ran mountain-high when you were a child into pitiful horse-pond shivers, never mounting above the tens. For my part, I don't believe a word of it. I believe the equatorial line cuts through Africa like a darning-needle, that the Atlantic waves would drown the Himalayas if they could get at them, that eclipses are caused by the beast which Orion is hunting trying to gulp down the moon, and I should not wonder if the earth was supported on the back of a great turtle, which hypothesis has at least the advantage of explaining satisfactorily why it is that we all travel heavenward at such a snail's pace, and founds in a sympathetic and involuntary attraction the aldermanic weakness for turtle-soup. When one has been born and brought up in an innocent belief, one does not like to have it disturbed on slight grounds; and people who have an insane proclivity to propagandism would do well to go to heathendom, where they will find ample room and verge enough in overthrowing mischievous opinions. But no punishment is too severe for him who roots up a thrill, and plants in its place only a fact. Suppose it is a fact, what then? Facts are not necessarily truth. Facts are often local, incidental, deceptive. But a thrill is the quiver of the boundless, fathomless life that underlies humanity,—a sign and a symbol of that infinite from which we sprang, and towards which, perforce, we tend. Come then, my robin redbreast! Never shall my hand rise sacrilegious to wrest from you heraldic honors. Always shall you wear an aureole of that golden light that glimmers down the ages, the one bright spot in a dark and deathful wood. Always shall you sing to me angels' songs, of peace on earth, goodwill to men.

So they hop through the May mornings' shade and sun, robins, and bluebirds, and

dingy little sparrows as thick as blackberries, at once wild and tame, familiar yet shy, tripping, fluttering, snatching their tiny breakfasts, cocking their saucy heads as if listening to some far-off strain, then, moved by a sudden impulse, hopping along again in a fork-lightning kind of way, and again coming to a capricious full stop and silence, with momentary interludes of short, quick, silvery jerks of head and tail. And, as they sit and sing,—as I watch their ceaseless business, their social twittering, their energetic, heart-whole melody, their sudden flights, their graceful sweeps, and agile darts,—I recognize the Pauline title-deeds, and, having nothing, yet possessing all things, I say in deed and in truth, “My birds.”

THE CROOKEDNESS OF BOSTON.

No city has any moral right to be as crooked as Boston. It is a crookedness without excuse, and without palliation. It is crooked in cold blood, and with malice aforethought. It goes askew when it might just as easily go straight. It is illogical, inconsequent, and incoherent. Nowhere leads to anywhere in particular. You start from any given point, and you are just as likely to come out at one place as another. Of course, all this can but have an effect on the inhabitants. Straight-forwardness becomes impossible where you are continually pitching up against sharp points. People born and bred in angles, and blind alleys, and cross-ways, cannot fail to have a knack at tergiversation and intrigue. Diplomats should be chosen from Boston, or should at least take a preparatory course of five years there, as soldiers do at West Point.

The number of the streets is amazing. The Bostonians seem to have a perfect frenzy for them. If they can squeeze in a six-foot passage between two houses, they are happy. Half a dozen stairs and a brick platform is an avenue and an elysium. They build their houses in the shape of a letter V, with the point sticking out in front, apparently for no other reason than the exquisite satisfaction of having a street pass up each side; and they make their streets crooked to look at, and then make alleys to get there. Washington street, the principal thoroughfare,

“Like a wounded snake drags its slow length along.” I have heard that it was originated by cows, meandering down to drink. This hypothesis may answer in the one case, but it won't apply to the smaller streets, for a cow could not make so acute angles if she tried. Owing to

his vaccine inability, Washington street rolls on with considerable dignity for awhile, but it goes off into a delirium tremens down by Cornhill and Dock Square. Everything is as shifting as a kaleidoscope. When you set out from the Revere House, you observed the landmarks. There was "Oliver H. Brooks's Eating-House," set in the middle of the road, and peaked of course. That is easy to remember. But when you get back into the maze, the thing is there, to be sure, wedging itself into space, but it is no longer Oliver H. Brooks's Eating-House; it is B. F. Paine's Fruit of all kinds Chamois. You go to the very spot where the Revere House stood in the morning. It has died and left no sign, and a block of brick houses reigns in its stead. When you went up Cornhill, "V. B. Palmer" stood at the head of it in gold letters, but when you come back V. B. has trotted off, and the various religious and publishing societies which congregate there have, in the incredibly short space of two hours, given way to Mr. Blake's Furnishing Rooms, or the Quincy House. As for Faneuil Hall it is perpetually dancing a jig with Dock Square. Places that you are in a hurry to come at, are never "at home." Places that you don't want, are continually turning up. You may wander about in that benighted region for hours, and every corner you turn there will be Faneuil Hall prancing before your eyes as pert and coquettish as if each time were the first. It is always within a stone's throw, but you never get close to it. I don't believe anybody ever did get close to it. And you never see it standing square. You never have a front view, nor a side view, but always a corner view. It must have secret springs, for if you make a flank movement, with the sole object of getting it in a straight line, it will manage to cut a pirouette, and present angles. Jefferson Davis threatened to go into winter quarters in Faneuil Hall. I wish he had. A sure way to stop the rebellion without bloodshed would be to bring him and his whole army to Faneuil Hall and suburbs. They never would find their way out again. I would not blindfold them. I would give them every clue that they chose. After they were once in, Boston could just shake herself, the clues would be good for nothing, and Massachusetts nurseries for a thousand years would shiver at twilight over stories of wandering ghosts, with phantom barred flags and shadowy Golden Circles, wandering, weeping, wailing, in the alleys of Dock Square, and monning ever and anon, like Sterne's starling, "I can't get out." I mention only Dock Square, but there are, as the Yankees say, "lots of 'em." That one has made the deepest impression on me, for whenever I am lost, I drift into that, and it seems like the nightmare. I suppose it is called "Square," on the same principle that the only man in the House of Representatives who cannot make a speech is called Mr. Speaker. Certainly there never was such a misnomer as Dock *Square*. Dock Dodecagon would be nearer the truth, but that would only approximate it, for a dodecagon has regular sides, and there is not a regular side to anything, from one end of Boston to the other, let alone Dock Square, which has no sides at all, but consists solely of corners. That the crookedness of Boston is not external only, but strikes in, there is abundant proof. You go into a shop,—Kinmonth's, for instance. You founder at once in a raging sea of agitated silks and laces and feathers. Appalled, you turn to Turnbull's, next door. Another sea, but something must be done. You want sixpence worth of galloon. At home, in your own little "cheap cash store," you could get it, and be gone, in two minutes; but the female population of the rural districts has a mortal aversion to buying anything at home that can be bought in Boston. The grandeur of the metropolis seems to cling around whatever radiates from it into the country, even though it be only a paper of pins. So, feeling very tall, and awkward, and conspicuous, you timidly ask the first clerk to whom you gain access for galloon. "Back part of the store," says he, briskly, and turns to the next corner. You color away up to your hair, and down under your collar, feeling guilty and ashamed, and very rustic,—as if you ought to have known, by instinct or education, that galloon is never to be found in the front ranks. You flounder through the press into the back part of the store, and repeat your request with as much *au fait* as you can assume. "Back part of the store," jerks clerk No. 2, and is off in a twinkling, and there you are, stranded high and dry. It turns out that what you thought was the back part of the store, is only the beginning of another room at right angles with the first,—and so you go on, and the rooms go on. You are shot up by some pop-gun of a clerk from counter to counter, from room to room, fondly thinking every one to be the last, but finding in the backest part a backer part,—(*vide* Milton.)—till, after making half a dozen angles of in-

cidence and reflection, you get your galloon, and—there is the door close by you! Is Turnbull's, then, built circularly? Have you circumnavigated it till, as the old geographies used to say, you have arrived at the point from which you started, in an opposite direction? In your bewilderment, this is not difficult to believe, and you depart, but everything without is changed. The din seems hushed, or far off. The tide of drays and omnibuses has ebbed. You remember that Kinmonth's was next door,—yes, there is Kinmonth's, but no longer next door; it has stepped across the street and stands opposite, and the big sign has dwindled into a little one. Terror-struck, you strike out at random, fearful lest the Merlin, or Math, or Michael Scott, who roams in Boston, stretch forth his wand again; sign, shop, and city disappear before your eyes, and you find yourself wandering among the forests and wigwags of Shawmut.

Boston, moreover, has a way of contracting and expanding herself that is marvellous in country eyes. You shall, for instance, be in search of Number Thirty-three. Passing up the street, reading eagerly every sign, you count "twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine,"—and then there is a sudden leap over to thirty-eight! What now? You look again, fancying you must have made a mistake. No, this door is certainly twenty-nine, and the next is certainly thirty-eight, if you can read Arabic characters. Eight houses, therefore, must be squeezed into one brick partition-wall. You think of microscopes. You wonder if the houses are to be pulled out one after another, as Mr. Hermann *prestidigitates* twenty apples and fifty tin cups out of one empty old hat. Presently, you summon courage to go into a neighboring shop, and request to be enlightened. They inform you that the missing numbers are attached to the doors of rooms inside. A most extraordinary circumstance! It is generally supposed that a house means a house. In Boston, however, it appears to mean only a room. Number Ten does not necessarily indicate the tenth house on the street. You must fumble through the dark passages and over the strange staircases within before you can be sure that it does not point out the tenth room. If we should go and do likewise in the country, numbering and labelling every barn, corn-barn, cider-press, pig-sty, dog-kennel, hen-coop, and dove-cot, we should have quite a little settlement at every homestead.

The result of it all is, that you never know how much ground you have been over, nor where you ought to stop. You make your way to the dry-goods desk in a shop, and ask for poplins, overhaul them all, find nothing to suit, and go on till you come to another shop, and by a similar process are passed up to a similar desk, and repeat your meek inquiry. "You looked at all our poplins a few moments ago," says the clerk, politely. You lift your eyes quickly to his face. Yes, it is the same man and the same place that you went to before,—and then do you not feel amiable? Yet you have been a Sabbath day's journey since then. How in the world, then, came you back again? Because these wary merchants open doors and send out feelers in all directions, and there is nothing for a poor, silly little fly like you to do but walk into their parlors whichever way you turn.

But Boston, though crooked and inexplicable, is not without her charms. "God made the country and man made the town," as a general fact. But there is a good deal in Boston that man never made and never will.

ANEMONES.

The anemones have passed into my heart forever. Their reign was short, but they bloomed in beautiful profusion. Almost before I thought of looking for them, I found a clump two feet in diameter on the edge of a swamp where I least expected to find any. I don't suppose a soul had seen them but myself,—a soul in a mortal body, I mean,—for I dare say many of the shining ones had looked upon it, and lent perhaps some ray of whiteness to its pure garments; but there in their sheltered nook, unseen, unknown, they revelled in sunny, exuberant life, every petal springing back with joyous eagerness. It seemed as if they gladdened at sight of me,—as if they wanted mortal eyes to be refreshed with a glimpse of their overflowing happiness; and the breath of the soft morning—a June morning dropped into the stormy lap of March—that gently swayed their pliant stems, seemed to intone a song of peace on earth, good-will toward men. I think they are very human. Perhaps it is because we associate them with those

"Who in their youthful beauty died."

Gazing upon their exquisite tracery, we see once more the blue-veined loveliness that grew so deep into our hearts, but vanished from our aching eyes long ago,—the first little baby-daughter, who learned only in heaven how

dear she was on earth; the sister who fell asleep while the dew of life was yet fresh on her brow; the young wife who glided out of the arms, strong but utterly powerless, that would have held her forever; the young mother who could have found her angel-garments scarcely whiter than the robes of her sacred motherhood;—so, with tear-dimmed eyes, we press the anemones to our white lips, and bless the memories, sad, yet passing sweet, which they awaken. There is a pain which is better and higher and holier than pleasure.

THE NOSEGAY.

(O that the old English nosegay might be reinstated in its ancient dignity, and the stiff, foreign, unmeaning, wrong-meaning, cut-and-dried bouquet ousted from the throne where its presence is a perpetual usurpation! It never will be naturalized, and never is natural. We don't know how to pronounce it; we don't know how to spell it; and if any of us do happen to know, the printer doesn't, and he goes straightway and spells it wrong. Let us have the nosegay, brimful of rich old meanings, replete with associations; and reserve the foreign word for the only thing which it fits,—namely, the round, stiff, hard, close-clipped, tightly-squeezed horror that comes from the hand of professional hothouse men,—solid enough to knock you down, if fired with sufficient force, and so ugly that you are divided between pity for the poor little things forced into such unnatural contiguity,—divested of the green which relieved their brilliancy from the charge of gaudiness, and laced into a hideous regularity,—and wrath against the man who has so misused his eyes and hands as not to be able to construct any better imitation of the viny, sprayey, feathery, airy, slender, pendulous lightness, winsomeness, and grace of nature than that artificial knob. Call that a bouquet, and with merciful hands rend off its swaddling-clothes, tone down its rainbow hues with all tints of green, from the pale tenderness that springs up on the sunny, sheltered side of the wood, to the deep luxuriance that lurks in its unsunned and unstirred heart, and make of it twenty nosegays, whose colors shall delight, and whose odors shall intoxicate.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

Do not affect a motive in love. It is not a question of motive, but of fact. I have no faith in marrying to do good. The end does not sanctify the means. If you do all the good you can with your own individuality, I

do not believe God will hold you responsible for anything more. Nor, in my opinion, does the respectability of the sinner diminish the enormity of the sin. I have known missionaries, excellent men, bury their poor wives in Hindoo jungles, and return to America to replace them, just as madam sends for a China teacup to replace the one broken by a careless servant. Men and women combine with Nature to abhor a vacuum, and the missionary's loss is often far more easily made up than madam the housekeeper's. Mysterious wheels, wires, and pulleys are set in motion by a clique of mothers in Israel behind the scenes, the result of which is, that some unoffending, benevolent, and practical Miss Brown finds herself suddenly precipitated, *nolens volens*, (generally *volens*,) into the arms of the good missionary;—he congratulating himself on the success of his business transaction; she consoling herself that she has gained an excellent husband, and done God service, thereby killing two birds with one stone; and the mothers aforesaid rejoicing in their skilful matrimonial diplomacy. Now I affirm that it is a miserable business the whole of it. It may be good manœuvring, where all manœuvring is out of place. It is an unholy traffic, though all the traffickers be members of an orthodox church in good and regular standing. It is transferring to the head what comes under the jurisdiction of the heart. The parties concerned may "live happily ever after," but they have no right to expect it. Of course, if a woman marries a missionary because she loves him, even though her love sprang up on his first Transatlantic appearance as a widower, and goes to Boorioboola Gha with him, because she would rather do it than stay at home without him, there is not the slightest objection; she is quite right: only let her say so honestly, if she feel called upon to say anything. But when she explains her marriage by enlarging on her sense of duty, the poor little children who stand in such pressing need of a mother's care, the heathen who are perishing for lack of knowledge, why then, I say, if these really are her motives, she is wrong.—just as truly, though not perhaps as greatly, wrong as she who follows the glitter of gold. Let her take a lesson from Jane Eyre and St. John, since she has failed to learn it from her Bible. If the claims of the heathen urge her so irresistibly, let her go to them untrammelled. The cause of God is not so desperate that it needs to be propped up by a falsehood.

Nor do I believe in marrying because, as I have frequently heard alleged, a woman's nature is such that she "must love somebody." In the first place, the implied fact is a convenient little fiction. There is no sort of necessity for your "loving somebody." It may be very pleasant to do so; it may be very distressing not to do so; but it is not immediately fatal. Even if it were, never mind. Remember Pompey's sublime words, "It is necessary for me to go; it is not necessary for me to live." Death comes to all, and the world does not need your bodily presence so much as it needs your moral heroism. If you die rather than live falsely, you will enrich it by one great example. Moreover, granting that you "must love somebody," does it inevitably follow that you "must love" a grown man in possession of a respectable yearly income? Look abroad at the orphans, thousands upon thousands, fatherless, motherless, to whom your love would be as the dew of Hermon. Christ's little ones are all around you,—the ignorant, the uncared-for, the outcast. Lavish on them your irrepressible affection. The sunshine of love might melt the ice in which their better nature is incrustated, and warm into healthy, vigorous growth the wasting germ of many a virtue. The idea, girls, the *idea* of sacrificing your whole life to a so-so sort of person, for the sake of having "somebody to love," in a world so full of children that the most execrating hand-organ will in two minutes block up the sidewalk in any portion of any city with admiring throngs of whiteheaded urchins!

To marry for a home or for happiness is little better. A home purchased by the sale of yourself is a dear bargain, and happiness is the most uncertain shadow you can pursue. It is incidental. It comes upon us unexpectedly; but if we set out determinately and definitely in pursuit of it, it generally leads us into bogs and quagmires, and leaves us there.

If, instead of promising to love and honor in the future, custom enjoined a woman, on her marriage-day, solemnly to aver that she did at that moment love and honor, I verily believe there would be fewer mock unions. I think it would be safer to let the future build itself, taking care to secure in the present a firm foundation, than to take the foundation for granted, and proceed prematurely to the superstructure. Many women, conscientious, but vague, unaccustomed to make

distinctions, to know clearly the difference between one thing and another, after long hesitating and vacillating, do finally zigzag their way to church, and make the most tremendous promises, with a misty kind of belief that they shall be able to keep them when the indefinitely distant trial comes,—who, if the plain question were put to them point-blank, "Do you now love and honor this man?" could not find it in their hearts, and therefore not in their consciences, to say "Yes," and would thereby be saved from a lifetime of suffering, perhaps of sin. Yet, I have heard a Christian woman seriously advise her young friend to accept a marriage proposal, because she "*would not be likely to do better. A superior woman must not expect to marry her superior.*" I have known a gentleman write, "I advise you, if an intelligent, truly Christian man, who really loves you, wants you to marry him, to do so." And a highly moral and religious community does not cease to warn contumacious maidens of the danger of "going through the woods and picking up a crooked stick at last."

There certainly are occasions on which, if you cannot do as you would, it is quite proper to do as you can. Nothing can equal a good sweet potato, yet you would be very foolish to throw away mashed Irish ones, because the frost has destroyed the more saccharine tuber. In default of mashed Irish, roasted will have no mean flavor. If the potato crop fails, "Boston brown bread," fresh from the oven, will enable you to bear the loss with philosophical resignation; and even boiled rice, the most unpretending of all edibles, is better than starvation. But a husband is not a potato, and if you select him on the same principle, be not surprised if you find him extremely indigestible.

" . . . as the dove, to far Palmyra flying,
From where her native founts of Antioch beam,
Wearied, exhausted, longing, panting, sighing,
Lights sadly at the desert's bitter stream;"

(Perfectly right in the dove.)
"So many a soul, o'er life's drear desert faring,—
Love's pure, congenial spring unfound, unquaffed,—
Suffers, recoils, then, thirsty and despairing
Of what it would, descends, and sips the nearest draught."

and is refreshed and strengthened, just as the shipwrecked sailor is refreshed by the mocking salt sea-water, which he bears in frenzy to his fever-parched lips.

Do you now, seeing that I have dealt chiefly in negatives, ask me what shall be the token?

My dear child, how can I tell? By just as many girls' hearts as are throbbing this wide world over, by just so many ways will love enter in and take possession. Keep your eye single and your heart pure, and you will not fail to recognize the heavenly visitant. The molecule of oxygen roams lonely through the vast universe, yearning for its mate, and finding no rest, till of a sudden it meets the molecule of hydrogen in a quiet nook, when lo! a rush, an embrace, and there is no more either oxygen or hydrogen, but a diamond drop of dew sparkling on the white bosom of the lily. So, I suppose, will it be with you, when you meet your destiny. A flash, and it is all over. Your heart is gone, your power is gone; power over your blood, that plays mad pranks in your cheeks,—over your thoughts, that hover continually about one spot,—over your memories, that wake to music only one string,—over yourself, henceforth forevermore, to be held in solution by a stronger nature than your own. Unless your love comes upon you thus, like a strong man armed, do not believe in it. If you, in cold blood, give up your name, your independence, your individuality, for a consideration, whatever that consideration be, you will be a wife only in name. Priestly blessing cannot sanctify unholy contract. If you have parted with your birthright, what matter whether it was for a mess of pottage or a stalled ox?

I know, therefore, of no reason why a woman should marry, except because she cannot help it,—because “the spirit of life which dwelleth in the most secret chambers of the soul, all trembling, speaks these words: ‘Behold a god more powerful than I.’”

If your love raises and exalts you, if it helps you on your heavenward way, if it brings you nearer to God, if it strengthens you to brave endurance, stimulates you to heroic action, and makes all greatness possible; if, in one word, it possesses itself of you, and sweeps you up and out from the finite to the infinite, as a wave bears seaward the strong swimmer, powerless,—you are safe,

If anything less than this satisfies you, if you content yourself with a feeble, sickly sentiment, that welters in the sun and breaks in the storm, your soul will surely suffer. An inferior nature may waken feeling enough to blind you for a little while. The cares and pleasures of a busy life may twine their rank growth so closely as to hide from you for a season the real barrenness of the soil beneath.

But from the one, twenty, forty years that lie before you, shall be born a day on which you will awake to know that you cannot give without receiving back full measure, life for life. And when your dream is dreamed out you will exclaim, more bitterly than the old dame of the ballad,—

“Yesterday I was the Lady of Linn,
And now I'm but John o' the Scales' wife.”

Your demon of discontent, cast out for a while, will return, with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and your last state shall be worse than your first.

Better, a thousand times better, go wandering all your life, than bring your household gods under an unworthy roof-tree.

There is, then, a way that seemeth good, but the end thereof are the ways of death. With this you have nothing to do.

But settle the point clearly. Know just where you stand. Have the boundary-lines accurately defined. Be able to give a reason for the hope and faith that are in you. Missing the crowning glory of womanhood, do not childishly depreciate it. Do not try to persuade yourself or others that you are at the utmost bound of the everlasting hills, quite in the promised land, when in fact you only see it through a glass darkly. Meet the fact boldly. Courage does not consist in feeling no fear, but in conquering fear. There is no heroism in marching blindfold through a thousand dangers. He is the hero who, seeing the lions on either side, goes straight on, because there his duty lies. Acknowledge to yourself, “I am not happy. I do not like my life. I must be capable of better things. I am uneasy, restless, discontented.” Then, knowing exactly the state of your case, apply to yourself comfort and healing. Remember first that God reigns. Infinite power is wielded by infinite love. The fatherly eye that sees the sparrows as they fall, will not let you walk in a random path. Life is a chain of sequences. From the cradle to the grave—ay! and beyond it—stretch the series of cause and effect; and what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.

Out in the World.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER I.

Undisciplined, wayward, sometimes petulant—pure, warm-hearted, loving. Life was simple feeling. And such was Madeline Spencer when she took upon herself the vows of wifehood. Her husband, Carl Jansen, was older by five or six years; a young man of placid exterior and thoughtful habits, but sensitive and proud. He had, by long continued effort, learned to govern himself; or, in exacter phrase, to hide what he felt from observation—to maintain a calm outside, even under strong interior excitement. He was considerate of those around him, as well from natural kind feelings as from a certain ground of principle; but, there was also in this consideration, a desire to stand well in the opinion of others. This love of approbation had been, in fact, a strong element in the work of self-discipline which had for years been in progress.

Jansen was selfish, as are all men, no matter of what culture or training, who have simply developed on the natural plane of life under natural motives. He had controlled his passionate impulses, not because they were evil in themselves, but because their exhibition would shadow his good name, or hurt his worldly interests. He was polite, deferential, calm, orderly, kind; in a word, gentlemanly in his whole deportment; but not from Christian ethics. It was not because he desired the well being—the happiness—of others, that he was so considerate of their comfort, convenience, or pleasure. It is questionable whether he ever regarded this. How will it appear?—what will be thought? Herein lay the boundary of motive; but not the conscious boundary,—let this be said in Jansen's favor. He thought himself better than he was. We say it not in reproach—he did not know himself.

No matter to what extent this culture of man's natural mind may go, the good exterior will only be an assumed beauty. The root will draw nutrition from the soil of selfishness. Out in the world, the man may counterfeit the saintliest virtues. At home, he will be what he is; and the reactions of home, if against his weaknesses and desires, will give another form to his life—hard, harsh, angry; it may be cruel. He will not prefer another to himself, as on the social plane, where he bids for fair opinions; he will not yield in seeming

blond good nature, the point of argument, will not consider and excuse faults of character nor read human nature against himself.

Undisciplined, wayward, petulant, yet pure, warm-hearted and loving. Such, in brief, was Madeline Spencer when she became Mrs. Jansen. And the young husband was exteriorly placid and thoughtful, but sensitive and proud. Such unions do not afford large promise of happiness; but they quicken all the elements of life—give rapid growth of character—and make men and women stronger for good or evil. They eliminate the saint, or develop the fiend.

An observer, writing in a kind of playful seriousness, on the phenomena of love, says that one man is enamored of a curl, another of a graceful ankle, a third of blue or brown eyes, a fourth of a swan-like neck, a fifth of a Grecian profile, and so on; the real character and quality of the enchantress rarely if ever coming into view, thus making marriage something akin to blind guess-work. Alas for many, when the curl loses its crisp circles; when the ankle's fine symmetry departs; when the blue eyes grow leaden, and the brown eyes swim in tears; when the neck shrinks into lines and angles, and the fine profile mocks an expressionless or peevish face!

It was the beauty of Madeline that first attracted Jansen; the beauty of her whole face when life flowed into it—the life of joy. Her complexion was of that pure, transparent pink and white, seen occasionally, and always so charming if accompanied by regular features; in her case made more striking by hazel eyes, close brown eyebrows, and long lashes of the same color. If the eyes had been blue, Jansen might not have been captivated. The brown eyes did the final work. Love takes for granted almost everything. The curl represents grace of mind; the blue eyes tenderness; the brown eyes depth of feeling; the nobly formed neck dignity of character; the clear cut profile internal symmetry. Love takes all for granted. Never questions—never doubts; and goes blindly to the altar.

Undisciplined, wayward, and sometime petulant, for all the pinky flesh and chestnut eyes! Jansen might have seen this; he did see it in fact—but, in his infatuation doubted the evidence. There was an error in the observation, he thought, some false adjustment of the instrument. It was impossible for imperfections like these to dwell in a casket so fair to look upon.

After the wedding day—after the honey-

moon, came the sober realities, the plain fact of married life; and none escape them. The worshipped divinity steps down from her pedestal and becomes a woman; still fair beloved, and worshipped, but not at the old distance. If she be a true, disciplined woman unselfish (in the ordinary acceptance of the term), and generously or lovingly inclined to minister in all things to her husband's happiness, comfort, and convenience, there will be unless he is a tyrant or a brute, a home in which peace can fold her wings. But, if she be not so disciplined and unselfish, but petulant, wayward, thoughtless, the chances are all on the other side. If, back of this petulance, and thoughtless waywardness, lie purity, truth, and a generous loving nature, the husband will be equally to blame with the wife, if clouds instead of sunshine hang over their dwelling place—nay, more to blame; for by virtue of his mental constitution, he may lift himself into regions of calm thought more easily than his wife, and so, rise out of the blindness of mere impulse. She loves and feels most; he dwells most in thought—and should let reason give clear sight and a just self-control.

Now, in the case of Jansen, there was, as we have seen, a habit of self-control. But, we have seen also, that this was not grounded in any spiritual motive; but was simply natural—that is, selfish. He loved the good opinion of others—liked to stand fair with the world; and so guarded himself, lest at any time he should betray unmanly weaknesses, passion, ill-nature, or hardness of character. The self-control, therefore, was not a restraint of wrong impulses, lest they should prove harmful to others; but a restraint lest they should, through some reaction, hurt himself. Just so far, and no farther, had Carl Jansen gone in the great work of soul-discipline, at the period of his marriage. As for his beautiful young wife, she had not yet taken her first lesson in self-command. Her impulses were her rulers. As she felt, so she acted. Her early training had not been wisely ordered. Her father had been indulgent, and her mother blind and weak. Naturally gifted, her mind imbibed rapidly, and she was better educated than most young women of her age. For music she had a passion. She performed with a taste and skill rarely acquired, and sang with a richness of vocalization, and absorbed feeling, that always drew a crowd around her when, in any large company, she sat down to the piano.

In this passion for music, Carl Jansen had no share. A few notes, or a few bars, when they first struck on his ears, came in waves of sweetness; but, like honey to the taste, this sweetness soon palled on the sense. After a few minutes, he would fail to perceive any response in his soul; and thought would wander from the vibrant strings, no longer discriminating chords or passages, and merely dwelling, half conscious of their presence, in a maze of sound, that disturbed rather than tranquillized his feelings. He generally experienced a sense of relief—particularly in social companies—when, to use his own words, “the piano ceased its humdrumming.” He had never said this to Madeline before marriage. Oh no. That would have been inconsistent with his world-side character. On the contrary, he affected a polite enthusiasm for music, and would stand, as if entranced, by the piano, asking her to play piece after piece, even while wearied with the sound of jarring chords, and impatient of her long-continued beating of the keys. This he called politeness, and consideration for those with whom we associate. It was on the plane of his assumed gentlemanly bearing towards the world; but its mainspring was selfishness. He was enamored of the maiden; he was the lover and the wooer; and every act was designed to conciliate her favor—as every act before the world was to win the world’s regard.

Herein lay the danger to happiness. This outside, with Carl Jansen, did not present the real man. That shrunk away and hid itself under smoother and compliant exteriors—looked out stealthily from blinds—was always standing on guard. It was different with Madeline. She had no concealments—never tried to veil her petulance or waywardness, more than her loving impulses. Every heart-beat showed itself in her transparent countenance. You saw the state of her feelings in her eyes. It was not a mirror only, it was a crystal window. You could look down through it into her soul. In every changing state, the past state with her was forgotten—she lived so wholly in the present. She was pure—she was true; but ignorant of the world, impulsive, wayward, and, for lack of discipline, self-willed. As to hereditary quality, she was a better woman than Jansen was a man—more sincere—less concealed. Yet, with all this, there lay undeveloped with her, strength of character—power of endurance; and a pride not easily quickened, but having

latent elements that, once inflamed with life, would make her inflexible as iron.

CHAPTER II.

After the wedding day—after the honeymoon, came the sober reality, the plain facts of married life; and none escape them. The worshipped divinity steps down from her pedestal, and becomes a woman; still fair, beloved, and worshipped, but not at the old distance. We repeat these unwelcome sentences—unwelcome to many, because the words will bear to them a meaning beyond their literal sense.

It was not long before the divinity of Carl Jansen’s new home stepped down before his eyes, and revealed herself as human, in whom were human weaknesses and human faults. The all-compliant lover was not merged, gracefully, into the all-compliant husband. Why should there be wooing, after winning and possession? A new order of things must follow marriage; an entire change of relation between the woman and the man. Before, the will of Madeline was his law; now, his will must be her law. There is a vast difference between the two relations; and the substitution of the one for the other cannot take place without a jar. If Jansen had been less selfish, and thence clearer seeing—able to change in perceptions, his stand point for that occupied by his young wife—the shadow of a cloud, dark enough to hold a tempest in its bosom, need not have fallen so quickly upon their lives. But, he had a cold, inflexible nature, which, to the world, veiled itself under warm and soft exteriors—and had so veiled itself to the maiden, Madeline. To her, he had ever seemed warm and yielding. Nothing hard, icy, or exacting, had appeared in all the happy months of waiting for the blissful day that was to make them one. She felt that he was all tenderness, all love; and that she could rest on his manly strength, and hide herself, like a tired child, when life had weary or sad moments, in sweet abandonment on his breast.

Alas for her disappointment! She awoke with a start—a shock—a wound—arose shuddering, yet in anger, and with a new consciousness of strength. There had been disturbances in her sleep—a troubled sense of pain and wrong—strange dreams that hurt and frightened her—a kind of vague nightmare, changing all at once to a gibbering phantom on her breast, when she awoke with a cry—awoke, never to sleep the old tranquil sleep again.

Let us come to particulars. The awaking was in this wise. Keep in mind the two characters with which we are dealing. The one undisciplined, impulsive, self-willed, independent; the other cold, orderly, inflexible, and sensitive to the world's opinion. How will it appear? governed his life in its social aspect. Is it right, and agreeable to myself? governed hers. She rarely, if ever, thought about what others might say or think of her—while he felt himself to be under constant observation.

It was five months after their marriage. During that time, the young husband had been gradually changing in the eyes of his wife, and putting on new forms of character. The honey-moon had scarcely passed, ere a jar was felt. Pain and surprise followed—vague questionings,—bewilderment,—doubt. Madeline pondered the fact, not comprehending it—pondered it, sitting in the edge of a shadow, that was advancing, black and cold, upon her life. Another jar—more questionings—deeper bewilderment—stranger doubts—the shadow still advancing. What was meant? What portended? She had entered a new region, and was losing her way. The path along which her feet had moved in dancing measure, grew all at once narrower, and she began looking to her steps; and then, as her eyes, from a vague instinct of danger, ran forwards, the path lost itself to vision. She trembled and grew afraid—sat down and wept. And this happened ere two months had passed since the bridal kiss lay sweet upon her lips.

How imperfectly do we understand each other. We move side by side, dwell in the same household, commune together, enter into the most intimate and sacred relations, and yet, continually misapprehend and falsely interpret one another. Each is a mystery—a human temple, into the penetralia of which none but God may enter. In just the degree that we selfishly live our own lives—that is, seek our own pleasures, and do our own will, are we in danger of misapprehending and misinterpreting others. Their acts, (all we really see of them.) if they fail to square with our rule of thinking—if they touch our sense of propriety, or interfere with our comfort or convenience, are read against them as signs of perverseness, moral defect, wrong intent, or evil desire; and we respond, in our action, to the assumed meaning of theirs. In so responding, were the truth really known to us, we should find ourselves wrong twice in three

times. But, we too rarely get down to the truth in these things. Our reactions upon assumed perverseness or evil, are met by counter-reactions, and we grow blinder and falsier in our judgments. Pride and anger rise up to cloud still more our better reason, and too often, alas! we lift the hand to punish where there has been no sin. If men and women made it a rule always to suppose good instead of evil touching the doubtful actions of those to whom they bear intimate relations, there would be peace and unity with tens and tens of thousands, who now perversely wound and hinder one another—turning the honey of their lives into vinegar and gall.

Both Jansen and his wife were strongly marked as to individuality of character, living so completely in their own ideas of life, as to render adequate sympathy with the peculiar ideas and sympathies of another nearly impossible. Herein lay the ground of danger. This was the barrier to unity and happiness. He was always guarding and hiding from the world his weaknesses and peculiarities—dropping down a veil when he appeared abroad—questioning as to how it would sound or seem, ere the impulse to speak or act found ultimatum. She, on the contrary, was a standing revelation of herself. Never on her guard—never asking what this one or the other might say or think—ruled by her impulses—sunny, showery, petulant, tender, passionate. Her heart beat along the surface of her life, and you might count the pulsations. It was this perpetual revelation of herself that constituted the veil of mystery, beyond which the eyes of Jansen could not penetrate—caused his mis-interpretations, and stimulated his impatience. He could not understand her character—far less, sympathize with her.

At the end of five months—after a troubled sleep, in which strange dreams had hurt and frightened the young wife—there came a full awakening. The stealthy, intruding, suffocating, weird nightmare, suddenly revealed, as we have said, its hideous form, and she sprung from sleep, with a cry of fear. It was in this wise:—

Beautiful, gifted, fascinating in manner, social, and gratified with the attentions that were lavished upon her, Mrs. Jansen was not in the least inclined to withdraw herself from the pleasant circles wherein she had shone as a star. Now, this did not please her husband. He wanted her more for himself, and felt disturbed when he saw her enjoying the company of other men. Hindrances had been

thrown in her way which only annoyed instead of impeding her. He watched her narrowly when in society, and she was constantly detecting the half-suspicious glances of his cold, wary eyes, a circumstance that did not cause reflection or concession, but only awakened pride, and led her farther away from the paths in which he desired her to walk.

Carl Jansen was a merchant, living and doing business in the city of New York. As our story has nothing to do with his business life, we shall not weary the reader with dry descriptions of his store, his clerks, or his customers. In regard to personal appearance, a few words must suffice. In stature, he was five feet eight inches—not stout—straight and symmetrical. He was always well dressed; had dark, fine hair, a little wavy; and clearly defined, smooth eyebrows, handsomely arched. Eyes nearly black. Side whiskers, just a little wavy, like his hair, and similar as to color. His profile was almost classic, and like chiselled marble in its pure outlines; but the face itself was nearly as pale and cold as marble. "A perfect face," was often said, when the eyes first rested thereon; but, the more you studied it, the less you were satisfied—the less perfect it seemed. There was defect in something that gave the sign of a true and noble manhood. You had an impression of narrowness instead of breadth—of littleness instead of grandeur. It was a face, the calm surface of which was rarely broken. There might be a tempest below, but few signs thereof would be revealed in his placid countenance. He knew, perfectly, the art of hiding what he felt; of restraining the flow of passionate blood ere it put a stain of betrayal on his cheek. Such men get credit for virtues not always possessed.

Carl Jansen left his store one evening in November, a little before six o'clock. It was almost dark. He took a stage in Broadway, just above Wall street. Two or three vacant places remained—one at the forward part of the stage, to which he passed. Before reaching John street, the stage had its complement of twelve passengers. The last man who entered, was a person well known to Jansen. A gentleman sitting next to him recognized this person as he came in, and made room for him. He did not observe Jansen. There was some defect in the stage lamp, and it went out soon after passing the Astor House; in consequence, the faces of the passengers were all in deep shadow. The last comer had not observed our merchant, who sat crowded into the corner of the seat, and who, being a

smaller man than his immediate neighbor, was quite concealed. The two men were, it soon appeared, intimate acquaintances. The one known to Jansen was named Guyton. He was a small Wall street broker, of no very fair record, but a specious, insinuating, shrewd, self-determined man, who was making his way in the world, and did not mean to fail through lack of wit and effort. He had a smooth tongue, a gracious manner, a rhinoceros skin, and a conscience without scruple.

"You will be at the club to-night?" Jansen heard his immediate neighbor say to Guyton, as they were passing Barclay street.

"No; I have something better than the club on hand."

"Ah! What?"

The two men drew close together, speaking almost into each other's ears. The rattle of the stage prevented their voices from being heard by the passengers sitting opposite; but, Guyton's face being turned towards Mr. Jansen, he, by leaning and hearkening with an almost breathless attention, managed to get nearly every word that was spoken.

"A party at Mrs. Woodbine's. Were you not invited?"

"The Woodbines and I don't take to each other. They are very nice people, no doubt; but, a little stuck up, since Woodbine ventured into the California trade, and came out winner instead of loser."

"It's the way of the world, you know," said Guyton. "But they give fine entertainments, and you meet some charming people there."

"Who?"

"There is one in particular. Do you know Carl Jansen?"

"Of Maiden Lane?"

"Yes; at least, I know of him."

"Have you met his wife?"

"Never."

"They've only been married a few months. But she is lovely! Wears the sunniest face you ever looked upon. A perfect enchantress! I am just going to meet her."

"You are!" Jansen did not fail to note the surprised tone in which this response was made.

"Yes; she's the attraction: I wish you could hear her sing. She has the most perfect voice I ever heard in a woman. It is divine."

"Does the lady respond to your admiration?"

Just then, in making way for a down-coming stage, the one in which they were riding

turned short towards the pavement, and the hind wheels grinding against the curb-stone, drowned the voice that answered; and so the eager, tingling ears of the surprised husband did not catch the reply. What he did hear from Guyton's companion, was not calculated to soothe his feelings. The sentence was this:—

"A little vanity in so good a looking fellow as you are may be pardoned. If, however, an old stager's advice be worth anything, let me suggest prudence. Trouble is apt to come of these things. Honesty is found to be the best policy in the long run, whether a man's gold or his wife be considered. You'd better come to the club."

"No, thank you! Not small beer when I can get the flavor of wine."

"How is Eric to-day?" Guyton's companion changed the subject.

"Flat," was answered.

"Hudson river?"

"Advanced a half. If you have a few thousands to spare, now is your time. It's on the upward move."

"Do you think so?"

"I know so."

Janson shrunk back into his corner of the stage with a mingled feeling of pain, anger, and mortification. Nothing more of what passed between the two men reached his ears. Did a suspicion touching his wife cross his mind? No—not the shade of a suspicion. He believed her to be true and pure, and it almost maddened him to think that the breath of such a man as Guyton should fall upon her cheek. The particular attentions of this man to Madeline on two or three recent occasions had not escaped his observation. He understood something of their meaning now.

But, how was he to deal with Madeline? How save her from contact with a person whose eyes he saw, in fancy, looking at her with the greed of a sensualist and a villain? The two men left the stage before him, and, unembarrassed by their presence, he pondered this new question, that seemed more difficult of solution with every repeated effort to reach an answer. Madeline herself had proved an enigma. He had, so far, failed to comprehend her character. She did not seem to reflect—had no worldly wisdom—no suspicions—no prudence. Her feelings were her leaders, and carried her whithersoever they would. Every effort so far made, whether gentle or firm, to hold her back from the social life in which

she found so much enjoyment, had been fruitless. The feeble arguments he could educe on the side of "moping at home," as she said, were to her as weak as gossamer. She blew them away at a breath.

"Life was given us to enjoy, Carl," she sometimes answered him in playful seriousness, "and we cannot enjoy it alone. The heart is social. It must have friends. Home is sweet—but the sweetest and purest lake that ever smiled back into the blue sky, or reflected the light of stars, will grow vile and death-breeding, if its waters be not renewed and agitated by the influx of streams. Because we have created a home, shall we retire into it and selfishly shut the door—letting none pass over our threshold nor crossing it ourselves? This would indeed be folly! No, no, Carl! We must not imitate the folly that is making so many homes in our land little better than gloomy cloisters. Does the marriage vow involve a renunciation of the world? Is the wife a simple devotee?—a nun?—I must be pardoned for thinking differently."

Carl might as profitably have talked to the wind as to argue against his wife. All this was, with her, a matter of perception. She saw it; and reasons to the contrary were to her as words without meaning. In all his efforts to draw her to his way of thinking—where it ran counter to what she saw and felt to be right—he had, so far, entirely failed. There was either a playful setting of him aside, or a more sober, but resolute, advance in the ways she saw it right to go. These were not perverse, doubtful, or dangerous ways; but simply the old ways amid social pleasures wherein she had walked for a few bright years; where Carl had walked also; and where they had met as lovers. In his eyes she had graced these ways once—was their most beautiful ornament—but now, she seemed out of her sphere there. It had been well enough for the maiden, but was not for the wife. The conversation just heard in the stage, confirmed all his objections to her love of society. But he was not clear as to the propriety of reporting this conversation—at least not for the present. His experience with Madeline caused him to hesitate. He was never certain of the way in which she would respond to a communication in any manner bearing upon her conduct. In most cases, she had acted in clear opposition to his way of thinking.

Carl Jansen, on reaching home, found his wife in the midst of elaborate toilette prepara-

tions, though it was yet full two hours before Mrs. Woodbine's guests would begin to present themselves. His face did not light up with its accustomed smiles on meeting her. He was too sober—too annoyed—for smiles. His eyes, clear and cold at all times, were particularly cold now; his face clouded; his lips compressed with unusual firmness. His presence, to the warm, light heart of Madeline, fell like a shade.

"What's the matter? Are you sick?" she asked, resting her eyes on his face, and trying to read every line of expression.

He said something about a slight headache; but his manner was reserved. As this was not the first time her husband had come home in a strange humor, on a like occasion, Madeline partly guessed the cause. A state of irritation followed. Jansen saw this change of feeling writing itself in her tell-tale eyes and face, and it sobered and discouraged him still more. Excess of feeling, while it blinded her, stimulated her self-will. He had gained experience of this already.

"There is no use in opposition," he said, to himself. "She will go, spite of anything I can say."

He might have told her of what he had heard in the stage. But, that would have been no reason for her remaining at home; only for a guarded demeanor towards Mr. Guyton. As the communication of this incident, at the time, would effect nothing, Jansen felt constrained still to keep it in his own possession. He would, of course, not lose sight of Madeline for a moment—would linger near her as much as possible; and watch Guyton with eagle eyes.

In this spirit he went with his wife to Mrs. Woodbine's.

CHAPTER III.

They were silent by the way—he, from a brooding, questioning, bound state of feeling; she, partly from the intrusion of his unhappy condition of mind, and partly, because she knew that to speak of her pleasant anticipations would meet with no cheerful response.

Mrs. Woodbine's elegant suite of drawing-rooms, from the last of which opened her choicely stocked conservatory, were almost filled with guests when Carl Jansen and his wife arrived. They had entered, Madeline leaning on her husband's arm; been received by Mr. and Mrs. Woodbine; and were moving down the room, amid richly attired women and their

attendants, when Mr. Guyton presented himself with a face all smiles and courtesy, and said, with the assured familiarity of a favored friend—

"Ah, Mrs. Jansen! I've been looking for you! Good evening, Mr. Jansen! Let me take the care of your lady off of your hands."

And before Jansen had time to think, Madeline's hand had been withdrawn from his arm, and she was moving away, leaning on the arm of the very man whom, of all men living, he at that time most detested. What was to be done? Anything, or nothing? For once in his life, there were red stains of passion in his cheeks. He knew it by their burning glow; and, in fear lest he should betray the almost maddening strife of feeling that seemed as if it would bear him beyond self-control, he moved out of the circle of observation as far as possible. But, he did not lose sight of his wife. How perfectly at home she was with Mr. Guyton! How familiarly did she lean towards him, looking up into his face, and answering him with sunny smiles and bright laughing eyes! He was an attractive man; taller in stature than Mr. Jansen, and altogether of a more imposing exterior. His manners were polished—his tastes cultivated; and he had fine conversational powers. Altogether he was a man to shine in society—one that fascinated women.

As Jansen's eyes followed them, a cold, dull sense of fear, that hurt as it stealthily intruded, crept through his heart. What did this mean? The unhappy man looked inward, searchingly, and found a new sensation, full of pain. Love had taken the alarm; and, suddenly, a mailed knight was by her side, with sword unsheathed. Under the half shut visor, you saw the gleam of a cruel eye. It was jealousy.

Now, in most cases, jealousy sees through an obscuring medium, and gives false report of every act. The purest smile is an invitation to step aside from paths of virtue; the simplest motion a betrayal of design; a foregone admission of evil distorts and changes everything.

Like a dissolving view, almost suddenly, yet by a strange, gradual blending with, and substitution of one thing for another, the scene before Carl Jansen put on new features, and a new significance. There was a dangerous tempter beside his wife—she was in peril. There was safety only in her withdrawal from his alluring sphere. This idea took entire possession of Jansen's mind. But, how

was this withdrawal to be effected? He was yet in the midst of his perplexed and troubled thoughts, when he observed Madeline and her companion pass from one of the drawing-rooms into the conservatory. As he was moving to follow them, he found himself face to face with a lady acquaintance, who said, as they recognized each other—

“I’ve been looking at your wife, Mr. Jansen. She is lovely.”

The lady was not a flatterer; but a frank, outspoken friend, well enough acquainted to assume liberties of speech.

“I’ve never seen her look better than she does to-night,” she continued. “Perfectly charming. Everybody is in love with her! I wonder you are not jealous. I should be, were I a man, and had such a beautiful, fascinating creature for a wife.”

“A poor compliment to both yourself and wife that would be, taking the supposed case as real,” said Jansen, trying to answer indifferently. But, his voice had no music in it. The tones were dull and husky.

“I believe you *are* jealous!” said the lady, in playful banter, passing her fan lightly before his face. “For shame!”

Once more, a rare thing for Jansen, the color rose to his cheeks, and he felt that he was betraying himself. A third person joining them at the moment, there was opportunity for dropping a theme which to him had proved almost painfully embarrassing. Full twenty minutes elapsed before he could disengage himself from these two ladies. During this time his watchful eyes had been upon the door leading into the conservatory; but his wife had not yet reappeared.

Jealousy moves, always, with circumspection—has stealthy, but quick-seeing eyes.—Voils alertness under forms of indifference.—Pretends not to observe, when every sense is acute. Jansen entered the conservatory with the air of a half absent-minded person, and stood near the door, in pretended admiration of a flowering cactus. He bent to the curious, irregular mass of vegetation—touched its fluted sides—felt of its prickly spines, and stooped to its crimson blossoms as if to find some odors there; yet, thought was scarcely noticing the plant, and his eyes, as he leaned over it, were looking between its branches, and along the green-house alleys. But their search was not satisfactory. A little farther away from the entrance depended a basket, in which an air plant was imitating a butterfly;—and so perfect, at first sight, was the

semblance, that Jansen was half deceived, and stepped closer to solve the illusion. The bright eyes and painted wings were but the coloring of a leaf.

“Isn’t it exquisite, Carl?” Jansen started to find his wife near him. She was still in the company of Guyton. Her face was alive with beauty and feeling. She looked more lovely than she had ever appeared. “You will find some rare and beautiful things here,” she added. “I have enjoyed them so much. Be sure to look at Mrs. Woodbine’s pansies, at the lower end. Such richness and variety in the coloring, I have never seen.”

In the next moment, she had vanished with her attendant, passing again to the drawing-rooms, and leaving her husband to the companionship of flowers. For a short time, he stood bewildered; then advanced a little way down the conservatory—stood, apparently, in admiration of a large orange tree; and then, turning, went back to the parlors. Through these, he searched in vain for his wife. She was no where to be seen. Presently music was heard. It came from one of the upper rooms. A few, who loved music, left the crowded apartments below, and went up stairs. Jansen stood in the hall, near the stair-way, in a state of indecision. A voice, clear and sweet, stole out on the air above, and came floating down. There was a pause in the movement about Jansen—a pause to listen.

“That’s your wife,” said one who happened to be near the young man.

At this moment, another voice, rich and deep, swelled out, in accord with the fine soprano.

“And that’s Guyton,” added the same person. “He’s a glorious singer. Come!”

The speaker moved to the stairs, and Jansen accompanied him. They went up, and following the rich sounds, entered a large front chamber, which had been arranged as a music-room for the occasion. The sight which there met the eyes of Jansen was in no respect calculated to soothe his disturbed feelings. The piano was so arranged that you could see the performers’ faces. Madeline was seated at the instrument, and Guyton standing beside her. They were singing a duet. Guyton turned the music, and in doing so, bent, with a closeness of contact, and a familiarity of manner, that struck the husband as an outrage; sometimes dropping, during a pause in his part, a word in the ear of Mrs. Jansen. At the conclusion of the piece, Madeline, who seemed to be conscious of no presence but

that of her companion, lifted to his her bright eyes and glowing face, and received, with evident signs of pleasure, the compliments he lavished.

Jansen was on fire! With difficulty he restrained an impulse prompting him to cross the room to where the performers were engaged, and invite his wife to accompany him down stairs. The act would have been an outrage; and he was able to see this clearly enough to prevent the folly. For nearly half an hour, he was doomed to the sufferings of a purgatory. The singers were enchanted with the music, and as he read their feelings in their countenances, with each other also. Madeline had never looked to him more ravishingly beautiful. Light flashed from her face and eyes, and floated around her glossy curls and gemmed head-dress, like a halo.

Dancing had commenced in the parlors; and this was gradually diminishing the company gathered in the music-room. Jansen was among those who lingered. A brilliant little Italian song had been sung by Madeline, and she was sitting quietly for a moment in the pause that followed, when Guyton bent down and said something. Smiles of consent and pleasure danced over her face, and she arose from the music stool and took his proffered arm. They were half across the room, when Jansen stood in their way, and looking coldly, almost sternly at his wife, said, in an undertone—

"I want you for a moment." Then bowing with an excess of formality to her companion, he said to him—

"Pray excuse her, Mr. Guyton."

Madeline looked seriously annoyed. Guyton was surprised, and stared at Mr. Jansen with falling brows, like one offended by a rudeness. He returned the bow quite as formally as it had been given, and left the young husband and his wife in the now almost deserted room.

"You are forgetting yourself, Madeline," said Jansen, as soon as they were sufficiently alone to escape particular notice. His eyes were riddles to his wife. What new, strange, dark meanings were looking out of them? They were full of accusation; were sharp with anger.

"I do not understand you," she replied; and she did not. The color had almost all gone out of her face, that was rosy as blushing May scarcely a moment back.

Jansen was excited and in mental obscurity. "Perhaps I can make it clear," he said, speaking in a tone of irony.

"Do, if you please!" His hardness was communicating itself. Madeline looked at him with shut lips, and cold eyes. He had broken upon her happiness too suddenly, and in a way that stirred her anger. She felt that there was something of outrage in his inexplicable conduct.

"There are some men with whom it is not prudent for a young wife to be seen in too close familiarity."

"Carl Jansen! Is it possible!" She was startled and indignant.

"I speak soberly," he returned.

"So much the worse," was answered quickly, and with a hot flushing of the face, which had grown so pale a little while before. "Your wife appreciates the compliment!"

"Don't make light of things that I regard as serious, Madeline; and, particularly, don't make light of this." He spoke in a warning way. "I am in no temper for trifling to-night. What I have seen and heard, justifies me in all I am saying and doing."

"And pray, sir, what have you seen and heard to-night?" demanded Mrs. Jansen, drawing a little away from her husband, and looking at him with flashing eyes.

"Enough," he said, "to warn me of danger to your good fame."

She turned from him with an offended air, and had receded a pace or two, when he moved forward to her side, and bending close to her ear, whispered—

"I am going home, and desire you to accompany me."

Madeline stood still instantly. She did not turn her face, nor look at him. Only a moment to reflection was given—no, not to reflection, but to the hindering of quickly springing impulse. Passion had away; but passion hiding itself from common observation. She answered in a firm, low voice—

"At one o'clock, I shall be ready to accompany you, not before."

"Madeline!" The tone was in warning.

"At one. Not a minute before." And she left him and went down stairs.

It was full twenty minutes before Jansen had sufficient possession of himself to venture into the drawing-rooms again. There was dancing, and his wife was on the floor—her partner, Mr. Guyton. He stood looking at them, as if under a spell. Every time the hand of his wife touched that of her handsome partner, a fiery thrill would run along his nerves, and strike on his brain with a shock. She moved before him, an image of surpassing

loveliness—an embodiment of pleasure. There was nowhere to be read on her joyous countenance the faintest sign of troubled thought. It seemed as if the memory of what had passed a little while before was wholly obliterated from her consciousness.

"Is she heartless! Does she defy me!" O jealousy! Blind, suspicious, cruel; how quickly dost thou lead the soul astray! Jansen moved back, and went into the hall, where he was out of sight of the dancers.

"I said that I was going home," he spoke with himself, "and what I say I mean. She made light of it. Very well! She shall know me better. My word is the law of my actions. I speak, and do. I said that I was going and I shall go."

It was one o'clock. Half the company had retired. The drawing-rooms were no longer crowded, as few except the dancers remained. For all the sunny face, and light, joyous manner of Mrs. Jansen, even as her husband looked at her in anger of this very joyousness, there was the weight, as of a leaden hand, lying on her bosom. And this had grown heavier and heavier, as the hours passed, until its pressure was almost suffocating. She had been dancing a set. The figures were completed, and the music ceased.

"I must find my husband," she said, partly aloud, and partly to herself, gliding away from her partner, and moving from room to room. Not seeing him, she passed to the hall, and then up stairs.

"Have you seen anything of my husband, Mrs. Woodbine?" she asked of the lady hostess, as she met her on the landing.

"No. Isn't he down stairs?"

"I think not."

"Perhaps you will find him in the music room. There are several gentlemen there."

But he was not in the music room. Mrs. Jansen went gliding down stairs, almost holding her breath. The hand that lay on her bosom grew heavier and heavier. Through the glass door of the conservatory, she saw figures moving among the plants. She went in, and along the fragrant aisles, but failed to meet the object of her search.

"Have you seen anything of my husband?" The question was asked of a friend whom she met on coming out of the conservatory.

"Not lately. Perhaps he is in the gentlemen's dressing-room."

"If you see him, please say that I have gone for my cloak and hood, and will be down in a few moments."

"Certainly." And the gentleman bowed.

It took Mrs. Jansen only a few minutes to get ready for departure. Cloaked and hooded, she came down stairs, eagerly searching with her eyes among the gentlemen who waited in the hall for her husband. But he was not among them. Disappointed, she drew back, up the stairs.

"Have you seen anything of my husband?" Again this question was repeated. She spoke to Mr. Woodbine.

"Indeed I have not, Mrs. Jansen."

"Wont you be kind enough to ascertain for me if he is in the gentlemen's dressing-room?"

"With pleasure."

"Say, if you please, that I am all ready."

A sofa stood in the upper hall. Mrs. Jansen was feeling very weak. Her limbs trembled. She went up from the landing, on which she had met Mr. Woodbine, and sat down on this sofa.

"Why, how pale you are, Mrs. Jansen!" exclaimed a lady who came up at the moment.

"Don't you feel well?"

"Not very," Madeline answered, faintly.

"You have danced too much. I feared you would overdo yourself." The lady friend drew a bottle of smelling salts from her pocket, and handed it to Mrs. Jansen. The pungent odor, stimulating her brain, partly revived her.

"You should have been more prudent. It was on my lip to suggest this two or three times. Where is your husband?"

"I am expecting him every moment. Mr. Woodbine has gone to the dressing-room to tell him I am ready."

Two or three ladies by this time stood before Madeline.

"What's the matter?" "Is she sick?"

"How very white she is!" These short sentences passed from one to another.

"I can't find anything of your husband,"

said Mr. Woodbine, joining, soon after, the group. One of my servants says that he went out nearly three hours ago, and that he doesn't remember having seen him since. And now that I think of it— Bless me!" His tone and manner changed instantly. "Catch her! She's falling!"

Madeline's head had dropped suddenly on her bosom, and she was slipping to the floor. Eager arms caught her, and laid her back on the sofa. She was colorless as marble, and insensible!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Out in the World.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER IV.

For two months Madeline lay ill at Mrs. Woodbine's. A portion of the time there had been despair of her life. Then she was removed to her own home.

More than one sweet hope died in her heart during these never-to-be-forgotten days. She came out of them, changed for all the time to come. What guarded explanations of his conduct her husband unbent himself to make, in no degree satisfied her. She did not, indeed, comprehend them. She could not get to his stand-point, and from thence view herself. Her very innocence and artlessness obscured all perception of wrong.

On the part of Jansen, there was regret for the consequences which had followed his too hastily determined withdrawal from the party, and he blamed himself for what he had done. But, pride kept back from his lips and manner a confession of regret, or an acknowledgment of blame. On this whole subject, he was coldly reticent; trying, as it were, to throw a veil over the affair, as something that could not bear the light. So far as Madeline was concerned, she was ready to answer for herself in everything—had no desire for concealment—would have justified herself to the last particular, because she knew herself to be loyal and pure. But, her husband never gave her this opportunity. If the truth, in regard to him, could have been exhibited in clear light, it would have shown such a state of keen sensitiveness touching the world's opinion of what had taken place, as to overshadow considerations that lay at the very foundations of peace and happiness. And this sensitiveness to the world's opinion did not regard his wife's reputation so much as his own. He wished to appear blameless in the eyes of all men; and, must we say it, desired, in his secret heart, that Madeline should stand convicted of wrong rather than himself!

Always, Carl Jansen was, consciously, in the world's presence. Keep this trait of character in mind. He was an actor on life's stage, and the men and women he knew and mingled with socially, or in business, were the audience. He acted badly, you will say, at Mrs. Woodbine's. So he did, and no one knew that better than Jansen himself. It was the smarting consciousness of this that made him cold and unforgiving towards Madeline. He blamed her for what he suffered; and

failed adequately to pity her suffering, because he deemed it deserved and salutary.

Out of sharp mental agonies most persons arise with a clearer moral vision. It was not so with Mrs. Jansen. True, her thought had a wider range; she had developed in some directions in a remarkable degree. But, touching her true position as a wife, perception had not grown clearer. She felt that she had been wronged in her husband's heart, and wronged by him before the world. Nothing was clearer to her than this. She could see it only in one light. What had she done? Nothing evil. In not one line had she swerved from honorable thought or feeling. There had not been the least variableness nor shadow of turning in the needle of her love, which pointed to her husband as its polar star. As of old, she had entered with all the outflowing impulses of her nature into the night's festivities. She had sung with that sweet abandonment of soul common with those who have a passion for music. She had felt the all-pervading sphere of pleasure that filled the atmosphere in which she moved, as she had felt it a hundred times before. That Guyton sought to monopolize her company was something to which she had not given a thought, until summoned so harshly by her husband and virtually commanded to retire with him from the house. Then, as a kind of self-justification, and from wounded pride, she permitted his further attentions. Had there been the feeblest motion of desire towards him—of preference above her husband—she would have started back from him in conscious fear and shame. But being, as we have said, loyal and pure, she did not, in imagination, invest him with any attractions that could hold her regard for an instant of time. He was a pleasant companion; that was all.

Alas for Madeline! Alas for her husband! that she had not come up out of the valley of pain and deep humiliation, with a clearer vision. Alas for them, that both were blinded by natural feeling, and that, alike, they saw obscurely—were alike disposed to self-excuses and mutual blame. There was no outward arraignment of each other—no allusion, even remotely, to that one unhappy circumstance, the memory of which was as an ever-present cloud in the horizon of their souls, dimming the sunlight; but, thought accused.

Each began to perceive in the other a sphere of coldness. The reserve that followed Madeline's restoration to health, increased rather than diminished. On the side of Madeline,

this was attributed to a state of hardness towards her by her husband; on the side of Jansen, it was attributed to willfulness and defect of love. To one thing the husband had made up his mind—reasoning from his own stand-point. It was his duty to guard his wife; to hold her as far as possible away from the allurements of society, and the dangerous association of attractive, but unprincipled men, and he meant to do this. If he had really known the artless, pure-minded woman who had promised to be true to him as a wife, he would not have seen his duty in this direction. But, he did not know her, and what was worse, lacked the perceptive power by which to know her. He had no plummet line that would sound the depths of her real consciousness. And so, standing side by side with her, in the closest of all human relations, she was yet a stranger. For all this, he judged her as inexorably as if the book of her inner life were laid open to him, and he knew every page by heart.

On the return of health, the friends of Mrs. Jansen, who made up a large circle, drew her speedily back again into society. Deliberately, acting from what he conceived to be an imperative duty, her husband began throwing impediments in her way. She stepped over them without pause, acting in part from a spirit of womanly independence, in part from awakened pride, and with something of self-will; yet, chiefly, from an impelling necessity of her life. She was social, and felt drawn towards society with an almost irresistible impulse. There needed to be a warmer atmosphere—more demonstrative love—tenderer consideration—to give home the magnet's power over her. Even these could not have made her content with a semi-cloistered existence. She could love her husband (if worthy of her love); be true to him in all things; be faithful to every home-duty, and yet enjoy society with the keenest relish. But, such was the limited range of Jansen's ideas, that he was not able to understand how his wife could love society, without a decrease in her love of her husband and the love of her home.

"We cannot serve two masters," so he reasoned on the subject, as he turned it over and over in the circumscribed chamber of his thoughts. "If she prefers social life to home life, then she loves society better than her home. If she prefers the company of other men to the company of her husband, does she not put them above her husband?"

So he blinded, irritated, and hardened himself causelessly; and this, simply because he

could not comprehend Madeline. On the other side, Madeline did not comprehend her husband. If she could have looked into his mind, and thus been able to understand something of his peculiar way of regarding things, the result of mental conformation and habits of life, she would have seen it best to deny herself in many things, in order that he might not read her actions as against honorable principles.

Selfish and arbitrary! Alas for domestic felicity, when a wife so interprets her husband! Madeline was not able to give any higher interpretation to her husband's conduct on too many occasions, when, instinctively, self-will, stimulated by pride, nerved her to opposition.

Carl Jansen was not what we call an emotional man. He neither enjoyed nor suffered intensely—nor in paroxysms—never forgot himself in the overflow of pleasure or pain; but he was a brooding man, and would spread his wings over a false idea, warming it into vitality, and bringing into life a host of suggestions falselier than the original; and what was worse, he too often acted on these suggestions as if they were truths. Self-poised, quiet, firm, resolute, he was one of those persons who, after adopting a line of conduct, generally pursue it to the end, bearing down—sometimes trampling down—whatever sets itself in opposition.

Madeline, on the other hand, was, as we have seen, emotional in a high degree. She could enjoy intensely, and she could suffer intensely; and what was peculiar in her case, the dominant wave usually effaced all marks of that which preceded. To her husband she was, on this account, inexplicable. Things that would have set him to brooding—that would have clouded him for days—passed with her as the morning cloud and the early dew. Now it was a rain of tears, and now a flood of sunshine. At dawn in the valley, and at noon upon the mountain top.

It was impossible for a man of Carl Jansen's range of ideas to comprehend such a woman. Narrow men are always exacting of prerogative. He was the husband and the head. Assuming this as the position of superiority, he saw very clearly that it was his duty as the head, to rule, and the duty of his wife to obey. The fact that she had defied his authority at Mrs. Woodbine's could never be forgotten—it was never forgiven. Often since then he had laid his hand upon her to hold her back, as she was moving in ways he did not approve; but as often, she had disregarded the intimations.

Remembering the unhappy consequences which had followed the decided course taken at Mrs. Woodbine's, Jansen had hesitated on the question of assuming, and at the same time maintaining authority. Many times he had resolved to assert the right, held as he deemed, by virtue of the relation assumed in marriage, but not prepared for consequences that might follow, he yet hesitated. Madeline was a riddle to him. The laws of mental action, as deduced from his own motives and consciousness, did not appear to govern in her case. He never knew how to determine the result of forces acting in her mind. It was a mystery to him that she had no sensitiveness to the world's opinion. This was his weak point—"How will it appear?" "What will he think?" or, "What will she say?" Forever, with him, action was coming to this standard, while she lived, and moved, and had her being, in an almost entire unconsciousness of observation.

It must needs be that minds so diversely constituted come, sooner or later, into stern and unyielding antagonism. Nothing but genuine Christian virtues, the growth of self-denial, can save from this unhappy result, and in the case of Jansen and his wife, only natural feelings and considerations had influence.

CHAPTER V.

The two months passed at Mrs. Woodbine's had not been useful to Madeline. Mrs. Woodbine was a person who generally managed to obtain considerable influence over young and ardent individuals of her own sex. She had a great deal of mental magnetism about her, attracting or repelling strongly. Tolerably well educated in the beginning, she had, by reading and intercourse with intelligent minds, enlarged her sphere of thought until it embraced philosophical and social themes. Not being a woman of well-grounded principles, it followed naturally that she lost herself in a region, the exploration of which had been attempted without chart or compass. It was a region however in which she saw much that appeared true, and in agreement with the laws of human life. But as she had accepted theories of social order not based on those immutable laws established for the soul by God, it was scarcely possible for her to attempt the correction of social disorder without shattering, by her meddlesome hand, a hundred delicate fibres, where she brought a single one back into harmony.

Women of Mrs. Woodbine's peculiar charac-

ter of mind, culture and temperament, have generally a large amount of sympathy with those of their own sex who are wedded to "brutes," and "domestic tyrants," and elect themselves advisers to all unhappy women who are indelicate or indiscreet enough to open their hearts to them. If they do any good, it is so largely counterbalanced by harm, that we shall scarcely err in unqualified condemnation of the class.

Of course, an incident so strongly marked as that which befel Mrs. Jansen, could not pass without comment. The fact that her husband went away and left her to return home alone at midnight, was too clear an indication of a serious quarrel, not to be accepted as evidence. Then, the brief conflict in the music room had been observed. Also, the nearly exclusive attentions of Mr. Guyton during the whole evening. A dozen little theories were started, first taking the shape of surmise, and then assuming the form of positive declarations. The ears of Mrs. Woodbine were open to all those, taking them in greedily. It soon became a settled conclusion in her mind that Madeline had a self-willed, exacting young man for a husband, who, unless she early stood to her rights, might reduce her to the condition of a slave. Her beauty, her sweetness of manner, her spirit, her high social qualities, interested Mrs. Woodbine, and she determined to use whatever art she possessed, in order to save her from sinking into the condition of a host of wives, whom she pitied for their helplessness or scorned for their mean submission to a power which in her view they should have cast off and despised.

As soon, therefore, as Mrs. Jansen began to recover from the worst effects of her sudden illness, Mrs. Woodbine commenced the work of poisoning her mind towards her husband. We use a strong but true word when we say poisoning. She did not in the beginning allude even remotely to Mr. Jansen, or the disturbed relation which she knew existed, but proceeded more cautiously, and by a surer way to success. In the first place, she spoke of the social inequality of men and women. She was well posted on this subject, and few men could listen for half an hour to Mrs. Woodbine, without a shame spot on the cheek. Men-made laws and customs, wherever they affected woman, would be shown by her to be the meanest of tyrannies, because they oppressed the helpless. She had peculiar eloquence when on this theme, and was scarcely to be resisted.

Human nature is weak, and in nothing is this weakness—or, if you will, depravity—shown more widely than in a love of ruling or domineering over others. And it too often happens that your emancipated slave of a real or imagined tyranny, gives the first use of his freed hands to binding some weaker fellow. So it was at least with Mrs. Woodbine. She celebrated perpetually, her emancipation from marital subordination, by ruling her husband with a rod of iron. It so happened that he was a peace-loving man, and of inferior mind; one always ready to give way rather than contend. He had married Mrs. Woodbine, because he admired her brilliant mental qualities even more than her personal charms, and he had continued to admire her, even though she too often made him appear mean and ridiculous in the eyes of the world. It was well for Mrs. Woodbine that such was his character. If he had been of a different spirit, they would have lived in fierce antagonism, or been driven apart.

"I am your friend, dear," she said one day to Madeline, who, a month after that unhappy evening, sat up in bed, with the soft glow of returning health just tinging her pale cheeks. Mrs. Woodbine kissed her as she spoke, and looked fondly into her eyes. "Nay, not a friend only," she added, kissing Madeline again—"that word is too cold to express my feelings. In the past few weeks, you have grown into my heart. I love you, my sweet child! You seem like one of my own flesh and blood. Confide in me, as if I were your mother."

Madeline was touched by this exhibition of tenderness, and accepted it as genuine. She had been lying with shut eyes, thinking sadly over the late unhappy affair, and with less of self-justification than before. Some rays of new light were stealing into her mind, and she was beginning to see the relation in which she stood to her husband as less favorable to herself than it had at first appeared. As a young married woman, she might not have acted with due reserve in company. Perhaps she had too completely ignored her husband during the late party. These thoughts were troubling her at the moment when Mrs. Woodbine touched her pensive lips with a kiss, and asked for her love and confidence. Tears filled Madeline's eyes, as she looked up, smiling a sad, but thankful smile, into Mrs. Woodbine's face.

"What troubles you, darling? There is something on your mind." The lady drew her

arm around Madeline's neck, and her head down against her bosom. Great sobs heaved the breast of Madeline; the pent-up trouble of her soul gave way. After a period of sobbing and weeping, she grew calm. In this calm, Mrs. Woodbine said—

"You are young, my child—have just stepped across the threshold of womanhood. Everything is new and strange. Already, I doubt not, your feet have found rough places—have been pierced, perhaps, by thorns. It is the lot of all. Your mother is not living."

"O no. She died years ago."

"And your father?"

"He is dead also."

"Have you no near female relative?"

"None, except an aunt on my father's side; but, there is no sympathy between us. She never understood me."

There followed a pause. Then, speaking very tenderly, Mrs. Woodbine said—

"Let me be to you mother and friend. You have always interested me; and since, by a strange, perhaps not altogether unfortunate circumstance, you have been thrown into the very bosom of my family, my heart has gone out towards you with an irresistible yearning. There is something on your mind. You need a friend. You may confide in me if you will."

Madeline looked with grateful eyes at Mrs. Woodbine. No doubt shadowed her. She accepted the proffer of love and counsel, as if made by one who was the very soul of truth and honor. Ruled by the dominant impulse—such was her character—she lifted the veil that no woman should lift to a stranger; nay, unless in the rarest of cases, not even to a sister or a mother; and let this meddlesome woman of the world see what was in the most sacred chamber of her life.

"I thought so." This was the woman's ejaculation, after Madeline had uncovered her heart, and made a troubled confession of the doubts which had been intruding themselves. She was bewildered in mind, and spoke that she might receive counsel.

"I thought so." It is not surprising, that Madeline looked up at the woman's face, with a countenance full of questionings.

"What?" she asked, a shade dropping over her eyes.

"I thought the trouble was here."

"Where?" The shade was deeper in Madeline's eyes. Mystery always lays a weight upon the feelings.

"Dear child!" said Mrs. Woodbine, with a

new ardor of affectionate interest in her manner, "you are accusing and tormenting yourself without cause. I cannot see, that, as a wife, you have failed in anything. You are true to your husband in every thought and feeling. What more is possible? If more is demanded, who has that more to give? Not you, my child—not you!"

The large brown eyes of Madeline dilated. A look of surprise, mingled with vague questioning, came into them. She did not answer, but kept gazing at Mrs. Woodbine. Dimly the meaning of what was suggesting began to appear. Had she not been true in every thought and feeling to her husband? What more was possible?

"Men rarely understand women." The tone in which Mrs. Woodbine said this was gentle and regretful, her voice falling to a sigh on the last word. "This, however," she added, "is scarcely a matter of surprise; their training, education, and associations are so different. A false idea, strong from generations of predominance in the public mind, touching the position of woman, warps the judgment of every man. He thinks himself superior. Assumes to be the head, in marriage, with the right to rule. Most women—a soulless herd, if I must say it—accept this doctrine, and passively submit. A few, of nobler essence, stand firm. Generally, the waves rush against them. Some are swept away—many abide to the end in their noble defiance of wrong; calm, enduring, grand in their assertion of equality. I have known many such, and I love and honor them."

The countenance of Mrs. Woodbine glowed with fervor. Her fine eyes were full of enthusiasm. Mrs. Jansen looked at her in a kind of maze; half surprised—half startled—half in admiration.

"You, my dear, are one of the noble sisterhood."

Madeline did not start in surprise when Mrs. Woodbine ventured upon this remark. She was in the sphere of the woman's strong magnetism. Nay, instead of being thrown instantly on her guard, she felt something like a glow of pleasure in being so classed.

"Do not understand me, my dear," added Mrs. Woodbine, in a low, penetrating voice, "as assuming that your case is an extreme one, as meaning to prophecy a life of antagonism towards your husband. I do not think him made of the hard stuff out of which some masculines are built into the image of manhood. But, he is a man, and all men have in

them the germ of tyrants. If you permit him to be the master in everything, he will not fail to accept the office of ruler. If you let him see that you are co-equal—possess a soul as distinctly individual, and of right as self-asserting as his own—he will admit your claims, and you will be co-ordinate and harmonious. There will, in the nature of things, be an occasional jar. There has been already. But, if you continue true to yourself; firm in the maintenance of what is your right by nature; never yielding to command—yet always faithful in clearly defined duties, you need have no fear about the result."

"So far," answered Madeline, carried away by her dangerous friend, and seeing in the light of her eyes—"I have not yielded to arbitrary demand. It is not my nature. If I perceive a thing to be wrong, I will not do it. If I see it to be right, and only an arbitrary opposition is set up against me, I cannot be held back. It is my nature."

"So I have read you, my child; and therefore it is that I say, you are one of the noble sisterhood."

Poor Madeline! This woman, at the very first effort, had succeeded in drawing her completely within the circle of her dangerous influence. The proffered friendship was accepted—the solicited confidence given. From that day, during the three or four weeks that elapsed before Madeline could be safely removed to her own home, this enchantress threw deeper and deeper spells around her. For hours she talked with her on the absorbing themes to which she had given so much thought.—On the social disabilities of her sex—on man's dreadful wrongs to woman—on the false ideas that prevailed touching just equality in the marriage bond—on the wife's duty to herself—and topics of a kindred nature.

Unhappily for Mrs. Jansen, Mrs. Woodbine first taught her to think and reason. So far in life, she had been mainly the child of feeling and impulse. A reflective being, in any high sense, up to this time, she was not. She felt, she perceived, and she acted. That was the simple process. But, during these few weeks, Mrs. Woodbine had lifted her into another region—had opened the door into another chamber of her mind. A theory, sustained by facts and reasonings that seemed clear as noonday, had been presented and accepted; and she only wondered that her own thought had not long ago leaped to like convictions. A few intimate friends, who

sympathized with Mrs. Woodbine in her peculiar ideas, were admitted to the chamber of Madeline, and she heard many conversations on the subject to which we have referred, and listened to them eagerly. Thus her mind was led to dwell upon them, and thought to gather arguments in favor of that womanly independence her nature prompted her to assert. When, at last, returning strength warranted her removal, she went back to the home of her husband, changed and matured to a degree that caused her often to look down into her own consciousness and wonder.

We shall not linger to trace all the progressive steps of alienation that too steadily separated the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Jansen. The causes have been made apparent. Two such minds, acting without concession, and without self-denial, must, in the nature of things, steadily recede from each other. And so, unhappily, did they recede.

CHAPTER VI.

They had been married for nearly two years. In all that time, the process of separation went on. This was not apparent to common observers—a few only saw the growing incompatibility. The fascination thrown around Mrs. Jansen by Mrs. Woodbine continued. This woman held her almost completely under her influence. Jansen understood Mrs. Woodbine's character, and did all in his power to draw his wife away from her sphere; but in this he failed altogether, only increasing Madeline's misapprehension of motives by the pertinacity of his opposition. One day some scandalous reports reached his ears, in which the name of a lady was used whom he knew to be an intimate friend of Mrs. Woodbine, and a constant visitor at her house. Mr. Guyton's name was also mentioned. There was, or at least Jansen imagined as much, something in the relator's thought behind his speech, not felt proper to communicate, and his quick inference was, that his wife's name had been in some way connected with the scandal.

"There must be an end of all this!" So he said resolutely, speaking with himself. I have opposed, remonstrated, argued, but to no effect. Madeline has set my wishes and my will at naught. But, this woman must be given up! I can no longer permit an association that is hurting my wife's reputation, if not corrupting her heart. If she be without suspicion and without prudence—if she will not look at danger though it stand in her path, my duty as a

husband compels me to interfere. If love and persuasion avail not, authority and force must come as a last resort."

Jansen felt himself to be the superior and the stronger; and scarcely doubted, that, under a stern assertion of prerogative, would come submission. Within an hour after hearing the scandalous report, he met his wife on the street.

"Where are you going?" he asked, in a tone that was so full of the right to ask, that Madeline's spirit rebelled.

"Shopping," she coldly answered.

Jansen turned and walked in the direction she was going.

"I wish to say a word or two." His manner put his wife on her guard.

"You are not going to Mrs. Woodbine's," he said.

"Yes, I shall, in all probability, go there while I am out."

"No, Madeline, not there any more. Scandals, touching persons who visit at Mrs. Woodbine's, are abroad, and I cannot have your name connected with them. But, we will talk all this over when I come home. In the mean time, do what I say."

Madeline was silent.

"You understand what I mean," said her husband. There was, in his voice, an assumption of authority that roused the pride of his wife.

"Good morning!" she said, abruptly, turning from him and crossing the street.

Jansen was confounded; then indignant; then angry. He read this action on the part of his wife, as a defiance of his assumed prerogative. If there had remained with him any tenderness of feeling towards Madeline, it retired beyond all range of perception, or died out.

In the evening, after tea, he asked, in cold, but repressed voice—

"Were you at Mrs. Woodbine's to-day?"

They had met in mutual reserve, and remained, until this time, almost silent.

"Yes." A simple, quiet, almost indifferent "Yes."

"After what I said?" There was little change in Carl Jansen's tone of voice.

"Yes," in the same indifferent voice.

"I said there were reports abroad touching the good fame of a lady who visited there."

"Well? What of that?" She looked him strongly in the face. Her voice was firmer.

"I have your good fame in keeping—"

Madeline's eyes flashed instantly.

"So, it is my good fame that is compromised! Well, sir!"—Her suddenly rising excitement carried her away, and she became almost tragic in her manner.—"And did you assert your manly right to defend your wife's honor, and punish the false defamer?"

"If my wife," replied Jansen, not undecieving Madeline, "in the face of warning and remonstrance, persists in associating with persons of questionable reputation, I shall not be Quixotic enough to quarrel with every one who may happen to class her with the company she keeps."

"You make a false assertion, sir!" Madeline was growing more excited.

"Take care, madam!" Jansen spoke in warning.

"I say, that your assertion, that I keep company with persons of questionable reputation, is false!" She spoke in a calmer voice, but with deeper anger, and more defiance.

"You must not use such language to me," answered the husband. His usually colorless face was now almost white. But he showed no agitation of manner.

"Guard your own tongue, then," answered Madeline, sharply.

"Surely, if I see a wolf on your path, I may speak without offence! What folly is this to which you are giving yourself over? I am amazed!"

"It is easy enough to cry wolf," retorted Madeline. "But, I do not choose to have my friends so designated. So, I pray you give better heed to your speech. It does not suit my temper. And further, Carl, let me say to you once and forever, that any assumption of authority on your part will not be favorably regarded on mine. You cannot influence me in the slightest thing by word of command, unless it be to act squarely in opposition. So take heed! I will walk in the world by your side, as your wife and your equal; but not a step behind, in submissive acknowledgment of inferiority. I am no slave, sir!"

Madeline drew herself up proudly.

Now, to Carl Jansen, taking his views of the marriage relation, which placed man at the head, as the wiser and stronger, and woman below him, as the weaker vessel, there was outspoken rebellion in this. They had been sitting face to face, the one looking steadily in strong self-assertion at the other. Half confounded, Jansen arose and crossing the room, stood with his back to his wife,

thinking rapidly, yet with thought obscured, and so groping in partial blindness.

Naturally calm and proud—with no great depth of feeling—of a persistent nature, and sternly resolute in walking the ways he thought in the line of right and duty, Jansen was standing now on the Rubicon of his own and his wife's destiny. Was it possible for him to yield in this open contest? Should he move back, or pass over? Behind him, he saw humiliation—the abandonment of right and prerogative—submission to an inferior power, involving disgrace and loss of self-respect,—beyond this Rubicon was a dark void, into the bosom of which sight could not penetrate; yet he knew it to be full of evil things—an abyss of suffering to himself, and of sorrow and shame for his wife.

For a moment, as he stood thus pondering, a good angel uncovered the past, and flooded his soul with the tenderness of early love. He saw Madeline as she had once looked in his eyes, the embodiment of all sweet conceptions—pure, loving, joyful as a summer day. His heart swelled with old emotions. He was beginning to move back from the Rubicon. But a darker spirit was near, and shut the page from view. He was cold, stern, resolute again.

"I cannot sink my manhood! If she drags down ruin upon her head, the blame and the consequences are her own." So he spoke firmly with himself. Turning, at length, he came back, and sat down in front of his wife. She had not moved. He looked at her, and she returned his gaze, with wide open eyes. There was no change in her manner; no sign of weakness. This pricked his feelings like the keen entrance of a dagger point. He felt irritated.

"We cannot live in open conflict, Madeline," he said.

She did not reply.

"For one, I could not endure such a life. It would be a hell on earth."

Still she made no answer.

"Madeline!" The tone was too imperative; too full of the man's self-assertion. There had just come stealing into Madeline's heart a softer feeling—her true woman's nature was stirring. But the lifting wave swept back under this wind of authority.

"Madeline! unless we are both true to our marriage compact—unless the just, heaven-ordained relation of man and wife be faithfully regarded—there is no hope of peace, far less of happiness for you or for me. Con-

sider! Pause, I implore you! Do not advance a step farther in the way you are going. Do not utterly defy me. I cannot bear such a defiance; nor be answerable for the consequences."

The head of Mrs. Jansen assumed a prouder attitude.

"Defiance? I do not understand you?" she returned, in a clear, steady voice. "Does the stream defy the obstructing stone that casts itself blindly into the free current!—or the stone defy the stream?"

She paused for him to answer. But her question only annoyed him. He saw its application, but held the allusion to be irrelevant. There was, on his part, only a gesture of impatience. He grew blinder and harder.

"Equal, Carl, equal!" said Madeline, seeing that he did not answer. "There can be no other peaceful relation between us. From the beginning, you have treated me as though I were an inferior; and my whole nature has been in revolt. For a time, I bore with an assumption of authority over me not warranted by our relation to each other—an authority that was irritating and offensive. But, I shall bear it no longer. You must step down from your attitude of command, and if you wish to influence me, come with reason and suggestion. No other way will suit me. As to the word defiance, as applied to my conduct, I pray you, never again let it pass your lips. You may influence me by gentleness, by kind consideration, by love, Carl, such as you promised me; but never by command. I do not comprehend the word obedience, as touching my free thought and act, except as referring to God!"

"I think," answered Jansen, in a cold, cutting voice, "that the words of the marriage ceremonial, to which you deliberately responded, were, 'Wilt thou obey him, and serve him; love, honor, &c.' The form was not mine. The church made it, and all good men and women subscribe to it as expressing the true relation of man and wife. There was no compulsion. You went, of your own free will, to the altar, and so registered your marriage vows. If you choose to cast them to the winds, the evil and the responsibility must rest on your own head. But, I pray you, in heaven's name, to pause! You have lived with me, now, for two years, and in that time gained some knowledge of my character. I am not impulsive, nor given to quick changes; but I am, by nature, inflexible. I endeavor always to work as close to the right as pos-

ible; and when I am assured as to the right, I move onward, never stopping to question about consequences."

"I have only one thing to answer," said Madeline, her voice dropping to as cold a tone as that which her husband had used. "Take my advice, and stop where you are to question of consequences; or, when too late to question, you may regret your inflexibility. Remember, that 'love has readier will than fear.' Remember, also, that there are natures so organized that they cannot yield to force. Mine is of that order."

She ceased, and waited for him to reply. But he remained silent. For all his consciousness of right, and for all his natural inflexibility, there was something in the tone and speech of his wife, that gave him a warning to pause. He clearly understood her to be in earnest; and saw the abyss that lay before them grow darker and more appalling. So, in doubt as to what he should say, Jansen remained silent. During this silence, Madeline retired from the room, and the subject was closed for that time.

Sleep did not give a clearer mind to either Carl Jansen or his wife. As to Madeline, her intercourse with Mrs. Woodbine and other persons of her school, whom she met in the frequent visits made to that lady's house, had seriously warped her views touching her relation to her husband. The idea of submission in anything, was scouted among these wise women as a degradation of the sex. Of the essential difference between what was masculine and feminine, and therefore of the true relation of husband to wife, they were in complete ignorance. Their ideas of equality gave to woman a range of mental powers exactly similar to a man's, and also a position, if she would but assert her right, side by side with man in every worldly use or station. The mental difference, so apparent to even a child, as exhibited in the ends and action of the two sexes, was not referred by these philosophers to any essential difference of spiritual organization, that limited the uses of each within certain spheres of life, but to false customs and habits, and to arbitrary social laws. And they had resolved among themselves to assume a larger liberty than women usually enjoyed, and especially to maintain an individual independence so far as each was concerned.

Grafting these views upon her natural love of freedom, Madeline's will sent out strange branches, that soon blossomed and bore fruits

of bitterness; and now she was lifting her hand to pluck and eat them. If her husband had been a wise man—one of a broader and warmer nature—he might easily have withdrawn Madeline from the influence of these bad associations; but he was narrow, cold, brooding and sensitive about his rights and prerogatives, and, what was more fatal to happiness in the sensitive relation held towards his wife, he had morbid views of duty, and a false conscience. He could be hard, inflexible, cruel, even, and yet stand self-justified. Of his own acts, he always judged approvingly—always took care, as he said in his thought, complacently, to be right. There was with him also the pride of consistency, and the conceit of a superior manliness, in not being subject to change.

"I am not one to be driven about like a weathercock, by every changing blast of opinion," he would often say of himself, proudly.

Such they were, and now they stood in antagonism, resolutely face to face, in the crisis of their destiny. The chances for yielding on either side were small; yet, one or the other must give way, or the most disastrous consequences would follow.

On the next morning, after a silent breakfast, Jansen said, as he arose from the table—

"I must say one word, Madeline, before I go out."

There was an effort to speak softly—even in a tone of appeal; but far more apparent in voice and manner was the assertion of a right to expect her compliance with what he was about saying. Madeline lifted her head quietly and gravely. Jansen saw, when he looked into her clear brown eyes, an unshaken spirit. For a moment he was in doubt—for a moment he hesitated; then he passed with a blind desperation over the Rubicon on which he had been standing.

"Don't be seen at Mrs. Woodbine's again!" The softness had died out of his voice—the tone of appeal was gone. He spoke as one in authority.

The color went from Madeline's face instantly; her eyes grew hard and fearful; slight twitching convulsions played strangely for a moment about her mouth; then, still as stone she sat, not now looking at her husband, but in a fixed stare past him, as if contemplating the dark future of her life.

Jansen was not moved to any change by this appearance; it rather made resolution

sterner; he had stretched forth his hand to the plow, and would not look back.

“Remember that I am in earnest!” he said, in a warning voice, and went out, leaving the stony statue of his wife sitting at the breakfast table.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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A PLEASANT JOURNEY.

We had one of these last summer, amid the beautiful and picturesque scenery which lies along the route of the Erie Railroad, through the heart of New York State.

The ride on this road is one full of interest and surprise, and charm to the traveller, who brings eyes for seeing the varied beauty of blue rivers and brown hills, of pleasant towns, and fair villages that rise, and smile and vanish on one's swift flashing path.

We want to say a word, too, in favor of the management of this road, of the kind and courteous officers who do so much to promote the comfort and convenience of travellers on the route. In short, dear reader, if you have the time and money to spare, just try a trip on the Erie Railroad, in which case we wish for you a journey as pleasant and refreshing and full of delightful memories as we had.

V. F. T.

The Austrian ladies have resolved to give crinoline a dead end. At Ischl, where they congregate during the autumn, any lady infringing against this fiat will have to feel the weight of the displeasure of the Austrian ladies. They have gone a step further, and intimated to the managers of the Vienna theatres that they will not patronize a house where the actresses wear crinolines. In England, also, a strong opposition to wide skirts exists, and organized efforts are being made to restrict the reign of a fashion that has long enough been carried to excess.

~~AND~~ OUR PREMIUMS.—The demand for our elegant premium plates is so large, and the process of photographic printing so slow, that we necessarily fall a little behind in the supply. But they are being sent forwards as fast as produced, and all who are entitled to receive them will be furnished in regular order.

Face to Face.

CHAPTER I.

What can be amiss at the Curate's house this afternoon? It is Christmas Eve, yet the children are huddling round the parlor fire, too miserable to speak a word to each other. The Curate is out, for one thing. If he were at home, be sure you would soon hear the laughter of the whole six ringing through the half-empty rooms this Christmas Eve. But now he is out. They saw him set off after dinner, with Thomas Gubb, the clerk, who bore a great bag containing a lot of warm things for the poorer parishioners that their father had collected from the richer ones. The boys would have liked to have gone too, but when they were about to start, Freddy found the sole of his boot peel right off, and their sister protested that as for some time to come, the lads would have but one pair between them, Georgy had better stay at home and let the boots, which were already growing thin, be kept for important occasions. And so all the six had sat moping by themselves in the parlor since dinner-time, their natural love of fun apparently quite gone out of them, looking through the window at the falling snow in the churchyard, poking their fingers through the high wire fender, and peeping at the sugar-basin in the cupboard. The house seemed very dreary that afternoon, and Miss Margaret, the Curate's eldest daughter, decidedly cross. She had been out since her father's departure, refusing to take any one with her, and had come back with a great brown paper parcel, which she would tell them nothing about, and had enjoined them not to speak of to their father until she gave them leave. As they had some hope of its turning out to be a cake, (though, if so, it must be of decidedly limp constitution) they did not worry her. After getting tea ready, she sat in the rocking-chair and took the youngest child on her knee, and began to tell them all a most exciting story about Cinderella; but instead of making the Prince's ambassador say—"Does the slipper fit?" she made him say—"Do the clothes fit?" and when the children laughed at the mistake, she smiled sadly, and saying she must finish another time, took a candle and left the room, the children looking after her with a dim sense of something wrong.

The clock was striking as Margaret Lattimer crossed the bare hall. She stood for a

moment at the foot of the stairs, counting it.

"Five," she said to herself, sitting down on the bottom stair. "He's sure to be in directly. Ten minutes more, and it will be all over. There's hardly time, but I must have one more look." Taking her candle, she ran up the carpetless stairs, stopped at a door on the first landing, and went in. It was the Curate's bedroom. On a chair beside the hard, narrow bed, lay a clean shirt. Miss Margaret set her candle down on the drawers, and, taking up the shirt, revealed underneath a suit of shining black clothes, which had evidently not come direct from the tailor, but been just sufficiently worn to take the set of the wearer's form. What could it be that made the little hands tremble so as she held them up and examined them all over, feeling the thick substance and the soft, satiny surface, and then replaced them in due order—coat, waistcoat, and trousers? These, then, were the clothes as to the fit of which the Prince's ambassador had been inquiring. She laid them down on the chair, and sat looking at them with burning, red cheeks, and the tears coming into her eyes. There was something in that fair, sad picture—that still and statue-like distress—which seemed not in harmony with the bareness and poverty of the place, and yet that seemed to supply all its deficiencies. She sat on the edge of the bed in her brown linsey dress, looking so exquisitely fresh, such a perfect little lady, that you would find it hard to believe the Curate's daughter did all the work of that old house; and yet, perhaps, if I tell you that the Rev. John Lattimer's entire income was just a hundred pounds, with rent and taxes to pay out of the hundred, you will perceive that he found seven children quite enough to keep, without a servant. Miss Margaret's face was fair and her eyes blue, so intense and clear in their blueness that, when any anger or agitation sent a heat towards them, you could see the faint cloudiness come over them—a change from azure to violet. Her hair was light, not golden, except when you could see the sunshine through it, but it made a very lovely frame to that round, clear-cut girlish face. The cloudiness I have mentioned was over the eyes now as they looked down upon the black clothes on the bed.

"What will he say? what will he say?" she murmured, once more taking up the coat.

At that instant a loud summons on the rusty knocker of the door made Miss Margaret start

to her feet, hastily arrange the clothes on the chair as they were before, and taking her candle, fly down the stairs, her heart's beat keeping time with her steps.

"Such a night, children! such a night! There, mind you don't get drowned!"

The Curate was shaking his coat in the hall, sprinkling with snow-flakes all the little creatures who had rushed in a body to the door at his knock.

"So glad you've come, pa," said little Jeannie, "it's been such a miserable day."

"A miserable day!" exclaimed the Curate, taking her up in his arms. "What, Christmas Eve!"

"Yes, but it's such a cold Kissmas, pa," said the child, shivering down upon his shoulder, "and we have such a 'little, tiny fire!'"

Mr. Lattimer walked into the parlor, and, after setting Jeannie in his arm-chair close by the fire, he stood on the rug, repeating to himself—

"Cold! Yes, poor children! it's a bright Christmas for them. All the prickly holly without the bright berries upon it—the cold, bitter frosting of the cake, but none of the cake itself!"

For a moment the Curate stood before his fire, looking down at it so fixedly that you could almost fancy the poor little fire was getting really embarrassed by his gaze and ashamed of its littleness, for it winked, and blinked, and tottered in its foundations, and at last collecting all its force, blazed out in one bright singing flame that lit the room and made little Jeannie smile and stretch her tiny hands towards it. For one moment, I say, the Curate stood looking down at it; and there came over his large, sharp-featured, pale face a dreariness and an inexpressible dull pain, as though something whispered to him, "Behold the fruits of eight-and-twenty years of toil!" But one moment, however, only one, did that look of pain cross the clear honesty and peace of the Curate's face. The next a smile came upon it—a smile that was like a sudden flash of youth in its brightness and strength.

"Little ones," he said, tenderly taking Jeannie on his knee, and drawing two more thin forms within his arm—"little ones! do you think it strange that papa should work so hard, and yet that we should have so little money? Shall I tell you how it is? Well, then, listen. Some men there are who work not nearly so hard and yet have many more comforts than we, because they may take all the profits of their work and spread them in

comforts round their homes; but, my children, I musn't do this; I work for a Master, for the good God, and to His profit alone. I take what is given me to live upon and to keep you with, but I cannot work for more. All the work of my hands and brain is His. Will you remember this, my darlings?"

There was only a silence in answer, and a general pressing nearer to him, and the touch of many soft, small trustful hands on his arms and knees.

Why did Miss Margaret keep aloof all this time? Did she not feel the truth of what he said? There was a cloud on her fair face, as though she did not quite.

"Here are your slippers, papa."

"Thanks. Why, Margaret, what's the matter? Have you got the headache?"

"No, papa—yes, a little; but, papa, will you come in the kitchen? I have some news for you."

Mr. Lattimer rose and followed her.

"Really this is a most comfortable kitchen, Margaret," said the Curate, shivering, as he sat on the edge of the table—"a fact one is apt to forget after cooking-time, when you always let the fire out. Well, what news, what news? Has Vaughan been here?"

"No," Miss Margaret answered with decision—"something much more important than that."

"I don't know, my child," said Mr. Lattimer, laughing, and shaking his head. "I expect one of his comings some day will be of considerable importance to me."

"Never mind that now, papa," Miss Margaret answered quickly.

"Well, well—the news? I hope it isn't so bad or so good as to try my nerves; for, if so, I should like a cup of tea first."

"Papa, I met Mr. Amore and the Doctor when I was out this afternoon, and they told me—guess what?"

"That the new Rector has come and brought his own Curate, and is going to turn us out."

"O, papa! No, but that they have both been to Sir George Blount to ask for the living for you; and that, though Sir George was a little put out about their interference, they have got you an invitation to the hall this evening."

"Yes, most likely to tell me what he did not choose to tell them, that he thinks such a proceeding utterly unwarrantable, and to ask whether I sanctioned or encouraged it."

"O, papa, he could not be so cruel as that."

"Well, we'll hope for the best; but he

musn't try me too far by his unworthy suspicions or his extreme views of the rights of property in such matters, else I shall tell him my mind very plainly."

"But, come, papa, you have scarcely time to dress and get there by six, and you were not to be a minute later."

It was very strange, but Miss Margaret no sooner said the word "dress" than the color rushed up to her face.

"My dear, five minutes is time enough for any man to put a clean shirt on," said the Curate, "and that, you know, is the only change in dress I can make, whether for Church or State occasions. Come, I must have a cup of tea first."

"And so he would really go in those clothes," thought Miss Margaret, as she followed him into the parlor; "why, he didn't seem to have a thought of what they were like after so much hard wear;" and while making the tea she pictured him to herself entering Sir George's drawing-room, Miss Effie's and all the young ladies' eyes turning on him, the proposed new Rector.

No; certainly the Rev. John Lattimer, as he stood on his own hearth, talking to his children and making them break out every now and then into peals of laughter by some good, round, hearty Christmas joke, certainly he did not seem weighed down in spirit by any sense of the meanness of his garb. Perhaps the work he had done in it, the hearts he had comforted, the minds he had enlightened, the death-beds he had prayed over in it, had invested the fading habiliments with a kind of sanctifying halo even in his own eyes. He did not contract his chest because he was sensible of a darn encroaching rather forwardly in front of his shirt, but held himself erect, flung back his shoulders, and all unconsciously let the miserable little darn do its worst for him in the world's eyes; and so, instead of its making him look ridiculous, he made the darn look ridiculous and absurdly out of place. He wore his poverty in his heart, as he wore the seedy coat on his back, with unflinching erectness, never giving the least way to its presence, never letting it eat into it; but keeping it separate and distinct, as a garment to be one day thrown off as he threw off his coat at night. So with his children. Fate had given to his boys a strength and breadth of limb, a natural erectness of bearing, and to his girls a grace, a vividness of bloom, which, while it made the shabbiness of their garb more conspicuous, yet held it off from them

and kept it from appearing as part of their looking at the darns, "perhaps you are right, characters. It is wonderful how much poverty Margaret. Perhaps it is a little too elaborately can be borne without sacrifice of health and embroidered for a simple evening call." Then, happiness, if only the mind sink not, but keeps remembering how closely she had sat over it itself healthy, pure, and vigorous. For this all the morning nearly, he added, with that reason, so far was the Curate's home from tenderness that gave to his rugged features having an air of stinginess or dullness, that and big form an almost courtly grace, "But, many a young and needy Curate would come put it by, lassie, put it by carefully; I don't from miles round to bask for an hour or so in wear my Margaret's work where it will be the sunshine and plenty which all these happy scoffed at, not I; I keep it and wear it as the young faces and rich voices at ordinary times knights of old wore their ladies' favors in the gave an impression of. I do not say but that battle field; there, put it by for church to-perhaps one face and one voice proved a greater morrow." And, taking the candle from her, attraction than any of the rest; but I do say, the Curate went up stairs.

that though there was often a good deal of No sooner had he left the room than Miss moping and sighing in the Curate's parlor, Margaret flung the neck-cloth on the side- there was not one of those young Curates but board, went out, and, shutting the parlor would just as soon have gone to the hall and de- door after her, stood in the middle of the manded the hand of the rich and beautiful Miss dark hall, listening intently. Now, the Curate Effie as he would have asked John Lattimer, always had a firm, reliant, somewhat heavy for his "penniless daughter," his "light-haired," tread, as though spiritually he were sure of sunny Margaret," his "pearl beyond price;" the foundations he had laid for himself; but for so the fond father would at different times to-night, as he mounted the stairs, after and moods call her. Besides, though there, having just looked his poverty in the face had been no positive engagement, yet it was through that well-darned neckcloth, Miss well known that Harry Vaughan, the young, Margaret thought his step was absolutely a Curate of Lescombe, and a poor and distant proud one; and the nearer it approached to relation of Sir George Blount, with whom he, his own room the more violently throbbed that was then exerting all his influence to obtain little, listening heart under the brown linsey. the Rectory for Mr. Lattimer;—it was well, Inch by inch she crept to the foot of the stairs. known, I repeat, that Harry Vaughan had a She heard his hand on the door-latch; all the pretty firm footing at the Curate's house; and doors of the house had latches; she saw the what man in all the parish of Littleington light pass suddenly off the staircase wall, and would have dared to enter into rivalry with heard his door close again; then, glad for him? Yes, it was looked upon as a sure thing, once in her life of the thinness of her shoes, that, what with his having the ear of Sir flew up noiselessly, not pausing till she stood George, and what with the influence of Dr. close outside his door. The Curate had taken Ellet and old Mr. Amoorc, the Rev. John up with him a sheet of notes for his sermon, Lattimer would get the living; that Vaughan not the Christmas Day sermon, which was would be his curate, marry Miss Margaret, already written, but one for the Sunday fol- and keep on the old house; and everybody lowing; and, while going on with his dress- agreed it was a most desirable state of things. ing, he kept adding more notes, repeating

"Come, papa, it's really getting very late," them first in his stentorian voice, the lowest, said Miss Margaret, after she had poured him deepest tone of which was clear and rounded out a third cup of tea. enough for Miss Margaret to hear every word

"My dear, I must not go hungry, or I shall distinctly.

be making an unseemly attack on the refresh- "St Paul says—Umph; see 1 Corinthians, ments at Sir George's, and the young ladies 2d chapter."

will be saying, 'Harry Vaughan has sent a Then there was a walk across the room, and wolf after the rectory.' But come, a candle. she heard the chair, on which all her thoughts

Ta! ta! children; papa must go and make were bent, dragged forward from its place.

himself beautiful. By-the-by, Margaret, have "Now," she murmured, closing her eyes

I a clean necktie?" and pressing both hands to her side. "Now!"

"Yes; but I think, papa, the one you have But no; the discovery she dreaded was not on is the best. Here is the other. What do yet made. The Curate had evidently left the you think?" chair to go and make another note, for

"Well," said the Curate, shaking it out and, presently she heard his voice again—

"As shown by the sparrows, St. Luke xii. and further illustrated in the same chapter from 'Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on,' down to 'How much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith?'"

What relation could these notes bear to Miss Margaret that her pretty mouth should quiver so at the corners as she listened? But hark! there is the chair dragged hold of again. Perhaps he was only going to move it out of his way. No; a dead silence! He sees; he evidently sees! Presently there is a low exclamation—

"What the deuce—Umph? What does it mean? Bless my soul! why!"

Then came a heavy stride across the room, a sudden opening of the door, and a tremendous shout of—

"Margaret!" that nearly knocked the quivering little listener down.

"Papa, papa!"

Mr. Lattimer retreated a few paces back into his bed-room. He was almost as much startled by the sudden apparition of his daughter as she had been by his call.

A piteous picture was Miss Margaret just then. There she stood, her two little hands clasped on her side, her blue eyes big with tears, her round rose of a face all pale with fright, and her light hair lifted off her shoulders by the sudden blast that rushed at her from the Curate's cold, draughty room. Yes, the sight of her seemed even a greater surprise for him than that which he had just had; but still he could not help connecting the two things together; so, laying his hand on her shoulder, he drew her gently in.

"Why, Margaret, what is this? Sit down. Quiet yourself. There! Now tell me, my child, where have these clothes come from?"

She looked up as she sat on the foot of the bed, holding the brass knob of the bedstead tightly—looked up, and saw him standing there pointing down at the clothes.

"O, papa, don't be angry. I'm afraid after all it's very wrong what I've done; but what will become of us if you don't get the rectory?"

"What have these clothes to do with my getting the rectory, Margaret?"

"Papa, if you go in your old ones to Sir George he will not like it; he will think—that is—I mean, Harry says he is so anxious that the new Rector should be quite a gentleman, and all that; not like Mr. Scott, you know."

"Well, Margaret?"

"Well, papa, seeing how everything almost seemed to depend upon Sir George liking you when you go, I was determined to get you some clothes somehow. There was only one way."

"And what was that? You would not go in debt, I think?"

"O, no, Papa."

"How then?"

"The society, papa, that you were telling me about for aiding poor clergymen in great difficulty. I found it very hard, but I wrote and told them all about it; and though I said you didn't know, and that if they wouldn't believe me I couldn't do anything more, they have believed me, and sent me what I asked for."

"And now, Margaret?"

Why, now, Miss Margaret had no more to say. She looked at him through her tears and wondered how she could have done it—how she could have doubted his looking gentlemanly, let him go in what garb he might—he who stood there in his shirt-sleeves, proud, offended, almost grand in the humiliation she had brought upon him.

"And, Margaret," said the Curate, presently, "suppose they had not sent them; suppose I had gone in these, disgraced myself, and lost the rectory; what then?"

Miss Margaret rose up and smiled; then, tremblingly and tearful, but still feeling a little strength, a little justification for her behaviour, she began.

"Papa," she said, sweetly and firmly, "papa, you would not have disgraced yourself; you would only have lost the rectory; and we should only be just as we have been all along. I should have spoken to Harry, and he would never have come here any more. That is how it would have been—how it shall be now if you like, if you cannot wear these things—only do forgive me, papa! It was so hard to do it!"

Mr. Lattimer looked at the clothes and looked at his daughter. Now, I should remark that Miss Margaret, for all her sweetness, ruled over the Curate's house with a certain piquant tyranny. A fortunate thing, too, it was for her, poor motherless soul, that with those wild boys she had it in her; and a natural thing, too, being so very pretty and so very clever, and so very sure that things at the Curate's must all go to ruin without her. I tell you this that you may the better understand Mr. Lattimer's feelings as he stood

by the bedside looking first at the clothes and then at his daughter; offering, with a face so piteously meek, and sorry, and earnest, to give up for him and her little brothers and sisters the love-dream of her life—the one hope she had of release from poverty and toil—Harry Vaughan, whose love, it was whispered, one of Sir George Blount's daughters had tried in vain to win. Should they let her do it, the Curate thought for himself and for his little ones? Should they keep their sweet rose all to themselves, and make that black-eyed Vaughan go about his business? Or should he put the clothes on, go and bear humiliation for her as she had borne it for him, get the rectory, perhaps, and be rid of her? It was a sore struggle. He looked at the clothes, took them up, and said, with a grimace,

"Was he an honest man who wore them, Margaret, I wonder?"

"You'll soon see, papa; they won't fit you unless it was."

"Then I'll put them on."

"O, papa, papa!" She flew and clasped him round the neck, sobbing against his shoulder as though her very heart would break.

"Yes, I'll put them on, and if my flesh creeps I'll say the flesh is proud, and not the clothes vile. I am proud, Margaret; it is the one thing that hinders me about my business. I think many of my clothes are. If so, God forgive us; for it can only be through the magnitude and grandeur of the message we convey, not through the quality of the messengers. There, look up, my pet; I'll put them on like a man, I mean like a charity boy. Come, Margaret, don't frown; there's been many a decent charity boy before me."

"O, don't, papa!"

"Well, I won't. There, run along down stairs and prepare the children for my magnificence; and if a genteel appearance, or thy bravery, my own darling, will win it, never fear. O, I'll get the rectory!"

Miss Margaret ran down, kissed the children all round, and, while moving away the tea things, behaved altogether in so fascinating a manner as to perfectly bewilder them, till at last it got whispered round (for scandal will circulate, even amongst children) that Mr. Vaughan must be coming.

In less than ten minutes Mr. Lattimer came down.

"Now, little ones," he cried, holding out his arms, "what do you think of papa as a charity boy?"

Margaret was not pained this time, because his words were followed by a chorus of small laughter, and by a roar and stamp of the foot in sympathetic merriment from the Curate himself.

"Why, he looks grand—grand," she said, clapping her hands, "and the clothes, I feel positive, never looked half as well before. But she stopped with the exclamation, "Whoever can that be?"

It was a loud, hurried knock at the door. Margaret ran to open it.

"Dr. Ellet!" she exclaimed.

The little old Doctor poked himself in, open umbrella and all, panting and blowing.

"Where's your father?" he asked.

"In there, Doctor. Have you come for him? Is Sir George angry about his being so late?"

"Has Amooore been?"

"No, Doctor."

The Doctor gave a satisfied "Umph!" He would, no doubt, rather be the bearer of good news than bad, but he liked to be the first bearer of either.

"Lattimer," he cried out, panting, across the hall.

"Here, Doctor! What news, what news? What! Have we gained the day without my going at all? That would please me!"

"Gained the day!" grunted the Doctor, sinking on a chair by the door, and panting between every word. "Gained the day. Ugh! I go up to the hall—Amooore and I. You're sure, Miss Margaret, that Amooore hasn't been here?"

"O, no," said the Curate, "your news is as fresh as this very moment."

"I go up to the hall, I find them in the drawing-room—Sir George, the young ladies, Stevens, and some others whom I got there to meet and to support you. I sit down. I listen to the talk a few minutes. I make a discovery, Lattimer."

"Quiet yourself, my dear sir," said the Curate, smiling.

"Quiet myself, sir!" shrieked the Doctor, getting up and taking the Curate by the button-hole, still panting. "I make a discovery, sir; so does Amooore. We both set off at once, only Amooore goes round by the mill, which—ugh! you know—he will have it is the nearest way. I come up the churchyard, and, consequently, get here first. He'll be here directly, and I'll face him with the fact. He can't deny it."

"My dear Doctor, this discovery?" said

the Curate. "You have set our curiosity on edge."

Hearing a footstep outside, and seized with a fear that Amooore might yet get the news out before him, the little Doctor determined to be explicit and sudden.

"Lattimer, the living is disposed of."

There was a silence throughout the room. Margaret did not faint nor scream—did not even utter a single exclamation. She sat down by the fire and held Jeannie close to her to shroud her face. The Doctor sat on his chair, panting; the Curate stood erect before him in calm reflection. Presently he turned and held his hand out to his daughter, saying, with a smile, but not a very firm voice—

"Margaret, we can bear it?"

How much there was in the *we*! She understood him.

"Yes, papa," she said, quite firmly, giving him her hand and looking up at him with her eyes full of tears.

"Well, Doctor," said the Curate, getting out the decanter with the little drop of wine in it that was obliged to be kept in the old oak sideboard, let times be ever so hard, "tell us who our new Rector is."

A sudden groan from the Doctor made him turn round; Miss Margaret turned round too.

"The young coxcomb!" he ejaculated. "But I always saw through him, though Amooore never could."

"Who has the living?" asked the Curate, point blank, pausing, with the decanter raised in one hand and the glass in the other.

The Doctor mumbled and fidgeted in his chair, and almost wished that Amooore would drop in and finish the business.

The Curate set down the glass and decanter and strode across the room to him, saying in deep tones, pregnant with new meaning—

"Dr. Ellet," he said, bringing his clenched hand heavily down on his shoulder, "who has got the living?"

"Who, sir? Why, who but that under-handed young puppy, with his aristocratic airs and graces; that!"

"Who?"

"Harry Vaughan. There! there!"

Another long pause and a deep silence.

"Margaret, my love, can we bear this also?" asked the Curate of his daughter, his voice now a little tremulous.

Her head was bent down on Jeannie's shoulder, but at his voice she lifted it up proudly and again answered—

"Yes, papa."

"You know how it is, of course," said Dr. Ellet; at least, you can guess the rest, as we did. "He's in love with Miss Effie Blount, it appears, and she with him; and Sir George, knowing the young man wouldn't have the audacity to propose marriage on his income, has loosened his tongue for him to-night by bestowing this living. I never knew such a scandalous thing in my life. And he to complain of our interference, too! as if your twenty-eight years of ministry didn't entitle even to ask him to think of you. But, if you'll excuse me, I'll go and meet Amooore, and take him home to have a chat, and see what *he* says about it."

"Certainly, Doctor. Good evening!" said the Curate in a dry voice, taking up the candle. And, bowing to Miss Margaret, who, however, did not return his salutation, the little Doctor bustled out of the parlor, took up his umbrella, and went forth in search of his friend and double.

The Rev. John Lattimer, after shutting out Dr. Ellet, returned to the parlor, took his boots from the corner and put them on. His movements were sharp and abrupt, and he seemed as though he dared not trust himself to look at Margaret; he could not, however, help turning round just as he was leaving the room. She had put Jeannie down, and sat in the rocking-chair, with her hands clasped in her lap, her head bowed forward on her breast, and all the sweet rose tints gone out of her face, leaving it as pallid as death, and the cloud over her tearless blue eye deepening.

John Lattimer looked at her from where he stood. And this was Margaret, his merry bird, his red rose, his dear, precious little household tyrant, first won from him and then cast back upon his hearth, thus crushed, chilled, smitten to the core. Well, well! He went to her and held out his arms, and she fell into them like a broken flower.

"My pet, my bonny pet," he said, huskily, "her Christmas present, these clothes, shall not now pass for nothing; papa will yet pay his visit to the hall. Children, take care of your sister."

He set her back in the rocking-chair, and Jeannie on her knee, and went out; and for once in his life the Rev. John Lattimer, as he slammed the heavy door behind him, was at last, in his passion, but as a straw in the wind.

To hear that slam of the door, to hear those three or four heavy, desperate footsteps cross the wet road, to hear the swing of the church-yard gate, was to make the stricken heart at the fireside of the Curate's house awoken from the stupor of its first great anguish, and throb with a new terror.

To what would those reckless footsteps lead them all? Ruin! Absolute ruin! He would go to Sir George, to *him*—go, stung with her wrong—would offend them both beyond all forgiveness—would lose the curacy.

Miss Margaret pushed the children away from her, and rose to her feet. Something must be done. What? She pressed her hands to her temples, and her soul sent up a wild, voiceless prayer for help. Was there anything—*ay*, anything—however desperate, she could do to avert the impending blow? Oh, show it to her, and she would do it! For some minutes she struggled helplessly to think of something. At last a thought came. It was a cruel one—so bitter as to make her utter a sharp cry as it struck her—yet she held it fast.

"I will do it," she said, "if it kill me! I will do it!"

Another minute, and Miss Margaret, in her old garden hat and cloak, which she had snatched from the hall chair, was half way through the church-yard. The rain had ceased, and the moon was rising over the hall gables, but the wind was wilder than ever, driving sharply into those blue, onward-gazing eyes, and tearing and tangling all that light, floating hair, as if to remind her mockingly how worthless it had become to him who once was never tired of praising it. The church-yard was soon left behind, the lane entered, and the village lights close before her. On she went, through the miry street, crowded with people, most of whom knew and recognized her, and soon she was running in the dark shade of the rectory garden wall.

The path was narrow, and hearing wheels splashing close to it a little behind her, Margaret stopped for the first time since she had left home, to lean against the rectory gates, and to take breath while the carriage should pass.

A workman, with his bag on his shoulder, was coming through, and he left the gates wide open. Miss Margaret shrank back a little out of the road, into the rectory garden, that the carriage lamps might not reveal her to the inmates, who were doubtless visitors to the hall, and might know her. In an instant, not

the carriage-side, but two horses' heads came in sight, turned towards her, then a light flashed across her face, and the carriage, passing through the gates, rolled up the drive. Miss Margaret turned and looked after it, and saw for the first time, that the house, which for the last month since the old Rector's death had been under repair, appeared to be quite finished, and was all lit up, as if for some party or reception. She guessed the probable meaning instantly; knew who they were in that carriage—the Blounts, of course, come to put the new Rector in possession. In that case, they must surely have left the hall before her father could possibly have reached it. No fresh mischief, then, had been done yet; and now it was for her to act—to do what she had determined upon doing—to avert the blow before he had time to come from the hall to the rectory. "Could she do that thing?" Miss Margaret asked herself; "could she do it, after all?" She looked towards the house. The carriage was just leaving the door, which stood open, and in the hall, with its darkly-polished floor, stood two figures—only two—Harry Vaughan and Miss Effie Blount. He was taking off her heavy black cloak; and when she stood without it, looking round with a languid interest, Miss Margaret shut her eyes at once, dazzled and chilled, and turned her back upon the rectory to leave it forever, and to let things take their own course. But then, when she came out of the gates, and her sick heart turned for comfort to those little ones at home—then, when again she remembered that angry, indignant spirit, which even now must be drawing nearer and nearer, and which, if she left it to wreak its force, must bring them instantaneous ruin—then she turned back.

Miss Margaret turned back; she tried to think of nothing in the world but the words she wished to say—tried to keep her eyes from looking at that open door and cheering hall while she approached it. The rectory had indeed known a resurrection since the Rev. Noel Scott inhabited it, with his dogs and fancy poultry, always working mischief in the garden, and breaking the solitary gardener's heart. Leaving the carriage-drive, which went curving round the lawn to the house, Miss Margaret almost lost herself in the little paths winding in and out among the evergreens, and was obliged to make her way out on to the soft, wet lawn, and run across it, before she could get to the house. That, too, was looking as solidly handsome and comfortable, with

its crimson curtains and glimpses into richly-furnished rooms, as a white, picturesque, round, two-storied and verandahed house could look. As she came nearer to the door, Miss Margaret perceived the hall was deserted. She entered, stood on the mat just within the threshold, and then paused, breathless after her run, and dizzy with the sudden light and warmth. A door on the left of the hall was open, showing a large room, nearly surrounded with book-shelves—half study, half drawing-room—just such a place as she knew Vaughan liked to work in. At that end which the open door revealed to her, she saw no one, but she had stood there scarcely half a minute, before she heard a voice speaking within—

"This is really too bad of papa. He promised to be here first, or I am sure I should not have come."

"I should have been sorry for that," was the reply.

Miss Margaret did not dare to hear more. She shrank back into the shade of the old portico as she heard the rustle of Miss Effie's dress. She watched her across the hall with two white vases in her hands, and enter a room on the opposite side.

"Now," murmured Miss Margaret, with a wild flutter at her heart—"Now, or not at all."

She tore off her hat and cloak, for the vision of fresh, fair elegance that had just passed her made their dowdiness almost unendurable, and pushing her hair from her face, she passed quickly across the hall, entered the door by which Miss Effie had just entered, and closed it after her. Now, Miss Effie was drawing back the heavy damask curtain, and did not hear the closing of that door, nor did she then immediately turn, but stood looking out upon the wild moonlight night. Margaret went up almost close to her. Still she did not turn, but stood with her beautiful arm raised, holding back the red curtain; and presently, as if overburdened with quiet, dreamy happiness, she bent her head upon the window-frame and sighed. Then Margaret touched her, trying to speak her name, but failing, and only moving her lips dumbly. Miss Effie started, and half screamed; but the instant she turned, and saw who stood beside her, she controlled herself by one strong effort, and looked at the pale, breathless girl, with a haughty, questioning gaze. They had seen each other before at church, or at poor people's houses, on visits of charity, but had never spoken; for, besides having a little jealousy,

rankling in her heart against Miss Effie, Curate's daughter was shy, and had always done her utmost to shun the beautiful young lady whom Harry and every one praised so for her cleverness, her magnificent Italian singing, and her generosity to the poor. Now, a certain instinct, vague, but unquestionably true, told Margaret that Miss Effie knew her as well as she knew Miss Effie at this moment, and the gaze of distant, proud surprise burned into her heart. It was a new and exquisitely painful humiliation heaped upon the previous wrong—this fact which Miss Effie's look wanted to make her feel, namely, that she was so far from acknowledging an infringement upon Margaret's claim with regard to Vaughan, as to pretend even an utter ignorance of Margaret's self. She tried to forget all this—tried to speak; but her heart swelled, and her lips were tied with as haughty a silence as Miss Effie's, and for nearly a minute there stood the two girls—face to face—looking at each other; Miss Effie with her back to the window, and the red firelight dancing up her tall, full figure, bringing out the golden threads that were mixed with her rich brown hair, and revealing by fits a pale, imperial brow, proud, melancholy, hazel eyes, a carmine cheek, a thin, sweet, tremulous mouth, a beauty in which was mingled a May freshness and an August coloring, a beauty which Margaret could not in her heart for one moment deny. And there was the Curate's little daughter, with the keen moonlight upon her, looking, with her tangled, colorless hair, and white, anguished face, like a pink rose blanched by a single night of frost. And the two girls looked at each other, both in proud silence; and while they looked, and ere either had yet spoken, came hurried, heavy footsteps, crushing along the new gravel. The chilled rose could stand proudly on its stalk no longer; being human, it must shiver and speak—

"O! Miss Effie, Miss Effie!" Margaret cried, clasping her hands beseechingly, and bursting into tears "help me—save us. O, speak to Harry! Tell him papa is coming—that he is pained and angry with him. He will speak hard words to him; but O, Miss Effie! ask him, for my sake—no, no, I beg your pardon, I didn't mean that—for the children's sake, ask him not to mind—not to quarrel with him! It will ruin us, Miss Effie, if he quarrels with him. O, go, go and speak to Harry, while I keep him back a minute!" During this appeal Miss Effie looked down

into the pale, pleading face, relaxing not a whit the proud expression of her own, and when Margaret ceased speaking, she said, coldly—

“Do you know you have never yet told me who you are?”

Margaret's face grew rigid again, and her eyes cloudy, but at the sound of a footstep in the hall, she clasped Miss Effie's arm with both her hands, and cried, in a husky, passionate voice—

“Mr. Blount, you know me—you know me well enough; if you don't I'll tell you who I am—I am Margaret Lattimer. Do you know me now? You are generous, Harry says; then don't make me humiliate myself any more. You are proud—then remember that I have had to pay dearly for all your happiness, and make me this return that I ask for your pride's sake. O, Miss Effie, it will be too late! Quick! I hear them talking! O, come!”

Margaret ran to the door. Mr. Lattimer had just entered as Harry Vaughan was crossing the hall, towards the room in which they were.

“Mr. Lattimer,” he said, meeting him with outstretched hand, and slightly heightened color.

The Curate did not take his hand, but fronted him under the hall lamp, with a sharp, scrutinizing glance.

“So Vaughan, we meet, face to face.”

Vaughan bit his lip, and looked down on the polished floor, then threw an impatient glance towards Miss Effie, and saw Margaret standing by her. He made a step towards them, but Mr. Lattimer stopped him.

“Vaughan!”

“Well sir?” returned Vaughan sharply, stung by the Curate's tone.

“Miss Effie! Miss Effie! for Heaven's sake speak!” pleaded Margaret.

But Miss Effie looked down upon her with her calm, proud, melancholy eyes, and smiled, actually smiled upon her, in all her humiliation and fear.

Margaret then turned away from her in despair—almost hatred, and went to her father—

“Come away, papa. Oh, come away!”

“Be silent, Margaret,” said her father, sternly. “Vaughan, I am unwilling to speak before this lady; but I must have some plain words with you to-night. Take me where you will, but I leave not till they are spoken.”

“Mr. Lattimer,” said Miss Effie, haughtily, “whatever charge you have to make

against Mr. Vaughan with regard to my father's behaviour, you will please to make before me.”

“Very well, madam. Then I ask you, Harry Vaughan, have you considered at what peril you do all this?” demanded the Curate, in a deeper and more threatening tone. “I will tell you, sir; honor, manliness, truth—this is the price you have paid for your bargain.”

Miss Effie's eyes seemed to flash like fire, as she caught the Curate's gaze.

“Mr. Lattimer,” cried Vaughan, turning fiercely, and Margaret knew that the worst had come, for how could there be peace after this? “Mr. Lattimer!” But he stopped suddenly; Miss Effie had gone up to him at last. She was not altogether stone, then, Margaret owned, in spite of her bitter dislike of her. She was at last deigning to act the fine lady, and to plead for the poor, savage, disappointed Curate, that he might keep his curacy, in spite of all his raving about his daughter's wrong. She only hoped now that she might be able to endure her bounty without some violent outburst, for she felt a heat within her she had never known in her life before.

“Harry,” said Miss Effie, and in speaking that name, Margaret discovered for the first time that her voice was thrillingly sweet—“Harry, I will answer Mr. Lattimer.” But she turned first to Miss Margaret, saying—

“Margaret Lattimer, you think you have cause of bitterness against me. You suffered great humiliation just now, when you came to ask me to plead for your father with Harry Vaughan. I did not make it easier for you by promising at once, as you thought I might have done. I allowed you to humble yourself before me, that you might feel for another when the time of her humiliation came. It has come.”

“Effie!” said Vaughan, deprecatingly.

She looked towards him with a faint smile, half tender, half sad.

“Thank you, Harry; but I begin to understand at last. You have done your best to prevent any rude shocks, while I have been wandering like a child in the dark; and now that there is light breaking, you still wish to spare me—to spare my pride. Harry, I am too proud to be thus dealt with.”

“My dear Effie,” again interposed Vaughan.

“Harry Vaughan, be silent. You might have spoken sooner, and I would have thanked you. But no, I did not mean to say that; I was unjust; but do not again interrupt me.”

“Mr. Lattimer,” continued she, turning

towards him, and away from Margaret, "we have been thrown much together, Vaughan and I. He honored me with his confidence in many things—I thought in all. He was poor, and proud, and constrained—so I fancied—to bury in his breast any—any—wishes—he might be secretly nourishing. He could not speak to my father, so I spoke for him when the late Rector died."

Miss Effie paused; her tones had been hard and low, yet wavering at times for an instant, only, however, to become again harder than before. Her face, at one moment crimson, changed in like manner to a terrible pallor. The expression, alone, never changed from its resolute sternness, which gave an almost awful beauty to the noble features and proudly-set head. The pause was but for a moment; then she resumed:—

"My father had always liked him, and now liked him still more for what he esteemed his long and honorable silence. He was, also, as you know, a distant relative. When the rectory became vacant, my father determined he should have it. He sent for him; but as soon as he began to speak, Harry urgently entreated him to give it you—so urgently, that my father was both surprised and offended. But, believing it only excess of delicacy on his part, he bade him take time for reflection—tell him (Sir George) of his decision before revealing it to any one else, and then dropped the words—'Go to Effie, and talk the matter over with her.'"

"He came to me, repeated his refusal, and begged me to promote the transfer of Sir George's favor to you. I was hurt by the request. I, like my father, supposed he was afraid of the seeming treachery to you, which we knew to be utterly without foundation. For his sake, and—as he may have guessed—for my own, I wished him to accept the rectory; but he still refused. I waited and wondered. Coming here to meet my father, I have been able to discover the rest."

As she ceased, she again turned towards Margaret, advanced, saw the yearning look in those blue eyes, and the slight quivering of the lip, advanced still nearer, put out her hand to draw back some of the dishevelled hair from Margaret's brow, drew her towards her, stamped a kiss on the bending forehead, and turned away, she not speaking a single word to Margaret, or Margaret to her.

"Harry, my boy," said the Curate, holding out his hand, with tears in his eyes, "you don't mean to say you're not a rector at all?"

"No, indeed, that he is not," said Miss Effie, with an attempt to smile. "On the contrary, he is waiting, I imagine, in considerable trepidation, to learn what chance there is for him in the curacy. He resigns Bittlestone, of course, where we have been accustomed to him so long, and must now, I hope, trust to you, Mr. Lattimer."

"To me!" said the Curate, pushing the hair off his brow, in undisguised amazement.

"Wait—I think I hear Sir George's carriage. Excuse me for a moment." She left the room and went into the garden. The carriage was just entering the gates. She went to meet it, beckoning to the coachman to stop where he was. As the coachman lowered the step, she said to him—

"Tell John to walk the horses once round the grounds, before sitting us down."

"Papa," said she, hurriedly, to the gentleman within, who was closely muffled up in furs—"I have sadly committed myself, and you alone can bring me off handsomely. But do not blame Harry; it was all my mistake."

"You mean he doesn't want the rectory after all?"

"No, papa; I mean that he doesn't want me."

Sir George moved as if stung. There was an angry exclamation, and then silence on both sides. Presently he said—

"Of course he gives up the rectory?"

"Papa, your promise!—unsolicited, too! Would you have it said that you bargained for me, and withdrew the rectory because he refused the daughter?"

"Why, Effie, you talk absurdly. I would rather, a thousand times, give it to that poor, half-starved Lattimer. In his way, he'd be a credit to the Church—if not exactly to me—and to my drawing-room."

"Papa, I have anticipated your very thought. Mr. Lattimer waits now a welcome from you."

"Here, John, turn round and drive home directly. You're a fool, Effie."

About this time there was a little bustle at the rectory door, an open umbrella cast into the hall, and the next instant Dr. Ellet had seized Vaughan by the hand.

"I congratulate you, my dear fellow. I don't know a man in the county worthier of the post. Am I the first, or has Amoores been before me? He's such a gossip, and has such a weakness for short cuts. Bless me! Sir George here too? Quite a party."

Yes, Sir George had come back, moved by

some still more forcible logic that Miss Effie had managed to apply.

"I come to welcome the new Rector, Sir George."

"And I," said Sir George, extending his white and jewelled hand with a condescending flourish to Mr. Lattimer—"I have come to do the same, Mr. Lattimer, and to wish you health to enjoy your new dignity."

"Eh? what? Lattimer?" shrieked the little Doctor. "Nonsense!"

"Sir!" said Sir George, turning upon him with majestic surprise, as he tapped his gold snuff-box. "Did you speak?"

"Sir! Sir George! is Lattimer the Rector after all? Is he really, though?"

"Yes, sir; most assuredly he is."

"But what did I hear this very morning, Sir George, from you in your drawing-room?"

"Sir," said Sir George, evidently with extreme annoyance, "you heard stale news, which you will oblige me by not alluding to again."

"Well, bless my soul! Lattimer, I do congratulate you! Really, what a marvellous transition of things."

The Doctor ran to fetch his umbrella, then said, "Here's a bit of news for Amooore! I might tell it to him first, if I could but intercept him. Excuse me, Lattimer, I'll go. If I don't meet Amooore before I get to the cross-roads, there's no saying how he'll come—he's so fond of short cuts. And if you get him here, you'll have him for goodness knows how long—he is such a gossip. Good-night! Excuse my short visit. I shall come again." And off he went.

"And I, too, Mr. Lattimer, must be going. Effie waits in the carriage at the door; but I won't threaten to come again, not till you are comfortably settled. I have friends at home, and only came in at my daughter's wish, to give you welcome to the Rectory. May I ask for your arm? Gout, did you say? O no, sir; merely a slight rheumatic attack, I assure you. Nothing to do with gout, sir. No sir, no—nothing whatever."

* * * * *

"Effie, I wonder what made Lattimer always dress so badly? He looks to-day quite the gentleman. On the whole, I am not sorry for what I have done."

Pity that Miss Margaret could not hear those words which fell from Sir George as he dropped into his seat. And yet if she had, she would have shivered to think of Sir George's feelings if he should ever guess or discover the source of the only new gentlemanliness the Curate had to-day put on.

Mr. Lattimer stood in the garden after the carriage had rolled away, wiping his brow. He felt he could not go into the house again immediately. He wanted the feeling of reality, the fresh air, the starry skies, the solid earth. Was all this true? Was he the Rector of his own beloved parish—fixed for life in comfort there, where all his affections, aspirations, were also fixed? He turned to walk round the basement of the house, amongst the wet, rustling laurels. His heart was growing too full. He wanted to get back into the shade of his old thoughts and old feelings, in order to examine closely the change that had come to him, and see that it was really good, for in the house, in the midst of his happiness, the glare was too much for him; he did not know himself. So he walked round between the evergreens and the house. As he walked, he suddenly saw a light across his path. He looked up; it was from a window. He only gave one glance into it, then turned quickly away. Yes, quickly, and with eyes full of tears.

What had he seen? Why, only a black, kneeling figure, with two fair arms locked around it, and a stream of light hair. Only that! But, coming upon him suddenly thus, when he was trying to get out of the too vivid sunshine of his prosperity, it was almost too much for the strong man. He hurriedly walked away, further round the house. Another light across his path! Again he looked upwards, but this time he was obliged to shade his eyes with his hand. The French windows stood open wide. Was it a picture in a dream he saw within that room—those children standing there, so strangely resembling his own children, except that they were silent and awed? He stepped in, like a moth that could no longer resist the fascination of the glare. At the moment he was caught sight of by the scared and wondering little things, they set up a great shouting and clapping of hands, for all that which had seemed like a wild dream before, became at the sight of papa a sure reality.

"Who brought you here?" he said, his voice more agitated than it had yet been.

"Harry Vaughan sent for us directly you and Maggy had gone, papa. He wanted a grand lady to see us."

The Rev. Mr. Lattimer understood then how his new Curate had been plotting to spare Miss Effie the pangs of a refusal, while intending by the visit to the hall, to bring things to a climax, if she had not saved him the trouble.

Out in the World.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER VII.

At his desk, that morning, as Carl Jansen sat over the letters of correspondents, the writing would fade under his eyes, and in its place there would look up towards him the stony image of his wife, as he parted from her at the breakfast table. He could not read the newspaper for that interposing image. It overlaid the prices current; the report of the stock exchange; the sales of real estate; the foreign news. If he opened a ledger to examine an account, he soon found himself gazing at his wife's statue on the page, that concealed all the figures, and hindered the results for which he was searching. He found it in his check book, his bill book, his day book; among invoices, and accounts current; on bits of paper taken up casually. Everywhere he encountered it. The eyes did not look into his; but, with a strange, fearful expression, past him, at something beyond.

Jansen went out upon the street; partly for business purposes—partly to escape the haunting image. But it pursued him everywhere. Looking at him, or rather past him into the dark beyond, from the faces of men and women—from pictures in shop windows—from all objects, animate and inanimate towards which his eyes were bent. There was no change of expression in the countenance—none in the hard, fearful eyes—none in the marble attitude. He went back to his store, to find the spectre there, among books, papers, accounts—among articles of merchandise—in customers' faces—standing out bodily, in the atmosphere.

But, he had crossed the Rubicon of his own and his wife's destiny. There might come regret, fear, even a shuddering sense of approaching evil, but no return. Carl Jansen could not go to his wife and say, "I was wrong!"—could not take back the words last spoken. They must stand, though hearts broke, and the home-temple fell into a shapeless ruin.

At dinner-time, as Carl laid his hand upon his own door, there came a brief cessation of heart-beats—a brief stoppage of the breath. Then he passed in. He did not find his wife. She had gone out, the servant said, several hours before, and had not yet returned. Jansen felt uneasy. Then a weight dropped down

upon him, so heavy as to produce a feeling of suffocation. Doubts began to obscure his mind. What if he had driven this sensitive, high-spirited woman to desperation? What if she had gone away, never again to return, except through his confession of wrong, and consequent humiliation of himself to a woman? This last thought, coming in with doubt and fear, stung his pride, steadied his shaking nerves, and restored him to inflexibility.

"If she is strong enough," he said, bitterly, to himself, "surely I am! If a woman accepts this ordeal, shall a man shrink from it? No—no! By all that manhood claims of strength and superiority—no!"

Thus, he further entrenched himself in the position he had taken. Pride sustained him through natural weakness. Pride helped him when pity, tenderness, mercy, and the old love assailed his strong places, and gave him the victory.

On the bureau, in their chamber, he found a letter. As he reached forth to take this letter, his hand shook; shook in spite of all his natural impassiveness and habitual self-control; shook so, that he laid it down and moved back some paces. But, he could not endure suspense in this great crisis. The letter was in his hand again, and as he unfolded the sheet, the irrepressible tremor of his nerves made it rattle in the air. The writing was Madeline's; clear and accurate at the beginning, but irregular, blotted, and bearing evidence of deep feeling in the progress and conclusion.

"MY HUSBAND—I fear that we have come to a place in life, where our paths must diverge; not, however, through my desire or my election. As I look out into the world, and dimly realize what I must be, and do, and suffer, living apart from my husband, I faint in spirit—I shudder at the prospect. My heart turns back, fain to linger in the sheltered home where it took up two years ago its rest in peace and joy. But, you have dictated the only terms on which I can remain in this home. I must be inferior and obedient. You must be lord, and I serf. The free will that God gave me, I must lay at your feet. Alas for me! I cannot thus submit. As your equal, I can walk by your side, true as steel to honor, virtue, purity, and love; as your inferior there can be no dwelling together for us in the same house.

"To-day, you have laid on me a command, and, deliberately, in face of all consequences, I resolve to act as freely as though

it had not been spoken. At the same time, I shall give you credit for being in earnest, and refrain from coming back, after I leave your house, until you send me word that you desire my return. I go, because I will not live with you in strife; and the terms you dictate render concord impossible. I pray you not to misunderstand me! Too much for both of us is involved. I do not go away from you, because I desire to repudiate our marriage contract, nor because there lives on this earth a man whom my heart prefers before you. I go, because you will not let me live with you in the freedom to which every soul is entitled, and in the equality that I claim as a right. Here is the simple issue, as Heaven is my witness! In whatever you elect to do, keep this in mind, Carl! Your wife asks for love, and will give love in return; but if you command obedience, love dies. She cannot dwell with you as a slave, and will not dwell with you in open contention.

"My heart is full, Carl, and my eyes so dim with tears, that I can scarcely see the page on which I am writing. If I were to let my feelings have sway, there would go to you such a wild, such an impassioned appeal, as no man living, whose heart was not of stone, could resist. The words are pressing, nay, almost imploring, for utterance. But, I press them back, and keep silence, for I will not be a beggar for the love you promised, nor a craven to submit. Equal, Carl! We must stand side by side as equals, or remain forever apart.

"It is vain to write more. If you cannot comprehend the stern necessity that is on me, after what I have said, further sentences will be idle. I go, because you have declared terms that make it impossible for me to remain. I will return, if you write a single line of invitation. If you say "come back," I will take it as a hopeful assurance for the future. If you keep silence, this separation is eternal! If you wish to see me, or write to me, call or send to number 560 ——— street.

"MADELINE."

After reading this letter, in an excited and prejudiced state of mind, Jansen threw it from him, under a first impulse of indignant rejection, and sat for some time in stern isolation of spirits—hard, angry, accusing, implacable. In the reading, pride had recognized only an assault upon himself and his rights as a husband; and he chafed in spirit. A calmer state succeeded. He read the letter again;

but still failed to comprehend its true meaning. In his view, it was rebellious and defiant; proudly stating terms to which he must submit, or his wife would permanently abandon him. If he had read this letter a third time, he might better have comprehended Madeline, and the true, pure, loving woman he had driven from his heart and home. But, he folded it with a stern spirit—crushing the paper unconsciously—and threw it into a drawer away from sight.

"If she thinks I will stoop to solicit her return—that I will humble myself at her feet—she is grievously mistaken!" he said. "I am not made of that kind of stuff. If she had known me, she would never have tried this mad experiment. It will fail—miserably fail! Go to her! Solicit her to come back! Promise to be submissive to her will! Give up manhood—self-respect—prerogative—duty—rights!—No, never! I shall stand just where I stand. I am her husband, and this is her home. If she, of her own choice, abandon both, what then? She persists or repents—I am passive. So all rests in her hands. I did not thrust her from my door, and it shall never be closed against her, so long as her life is without stain. But, I cannot solicit her to come back—I will not solicit her!"

Jansen was not a man of half purposes; nor of the disposition that reviews determined lines of action, hesitating, doubting, repenting. There was something of the gypsum quality in his mind; determinations "set" quickly, and were not resolved again into free thought. Madeline was not wholly ignorant of this, when she took bold issue with her husband. She knew him to be narrow, selfish, proud, and stubbornly persistent in any line of conduct he might adopt. Yet, she braved all consequences in her blindness; abandoning duty, love, ease, comfort, and that independence of the world, the absence of which is so wounding to all women of sensitive feelings and high spirit.

As men and women are—born with selfish inclinations, and inherited peculiarities—mutual concession is an essential rule of action in marriage. If this rule is not observed, strife must come. Were we in original purity of soul—or, through observance of divine laws restored to that purity—then no conflicts could arise. Love would be the governing law. In the degree that any individual is so restored, or regenerated through a life according to the Divine Word, so far will that individual, even

in the case of a woman unhappily married, submit to things unjust and hard to bear, rather than abandon all, trusting by patience, gentleness, and a loving observance of every duty, to lift her husband into a juster perception of the relation they bear to each other. She will give up many innocent things, because his warped or narrow views will not let him regard them as allowable. Nay, even submit to arbitrary rule and dictation, rather than grapple with him in a conflict that can only end in submission, for one perpetual strife, or separation. And what is true of the woman, whose soul is rising out of the dominion of natural evils, is in like manner true of the man. He will bear and forbear—will yield and even submit in much—rather than break the most sacred of all bonds. And all this may be done without any real abandonment of that free will, whose highest office is to reject evil and choose good.

But, where there is no law of spiritual life in the soul, leading to concession for another's good, then let the law of truth in the understanding, which every one may accept, act as a controlling force, and hold all things in fealty to higher duties, though the way in which the feet must walk be difficult, often going deep down into the vale of humiliation.

Madeline was wrong. Both were wrong. False views, stimulated by passion and self-will, had made a breach between them. Neither had the spirit of concession, but, instead, the spirit of accusation; and there was no angel in their hearts to bridge the widening chasm with love. Jansen had acted with inconsiderate haste, pressing an interdict upon his wife while she was yet too blind to see all that she might have seen of duty and prudence, had he dealt with her more tenderly and wisely; and Madeline, with equal haste and lack of regard for her husband's excited state of mind, had set him at defiance. So, in mutual blame, they had been driven asunder.

CHAPTER VIII.

If Carl Jansen could have annihilated that statue-like image of his wife, as he last parted from her at the breakfast table, he would have felt better; but, let thought turn towards Madeline when it would, thus he saw her. By an effort of will, other images might be projected before his eyes; but they faded out quickly, leaving the stony statue in their place. It was so all through the first agitated, but resolved, evening following Madeline's departure; so through all the succeeding days

and weeks. Even years had no power wholly to cover and hide that strange, fearful spectre, which, for a few moments, held his vision like an enchanter's spell.

No word, no sign from either. Both lived, for weeks, in blank suspense; yet wrapped about in pride, and without thought of concession.

Poor Madeline! She had gone out into the world alone. Who were her faithful friends? Upon whom, now, was she to lean? Over the threshold of what home might her feet pass confidently, and with the firm tread of one who had a right to enter? Alas for the bewildered, erring young creature! She had not counted all the cost of this wrong act. When she left her husband's house, she went directly to Mrs. Woodbine's. But, with what a different feeling from any experienced before did she enter the residence of her specious friend. The old feeling of independence and equality had strangely departed from her. Now she was a homeless wanderer, coming to ask for temporary shelter. So keenly did she feel this as she stood at Mrs. Woodbine's door, that, but for having rung the bell, she would have turned away, and gone home to reconsider the step she was taking. But, she heard the servant's feet along the hall, and it was too late to retreat.

"Ah, my dear Mrs. Jansen!" With this heartily uttered welcome, Mrs. Woodbine entered the drawing-room where Madeline sat awaiting her, and, catching her hand, pressed it warmly. "But, bless me, child!" she added, in a changed voice, "what's the matter? You're as pale as a sheet?"

Madeline tried to answer; but there was only a dumb motion of the lips.

"Are you sick?"

Madeline shook her head.

"Nothing wrong with your husband I hope?"

"Yes." The tone was faint, and, even on this monosyllable, betrayed a tremor.

"What is it child?" asked Mrs. Woodbine.

"I have left him."

"No!"

"It is true, Mrs. Woodbine!" The heart of Madeline was not strong enough. She sobbed out aloud, and hid her face.

"This is a serious matter, my dear," said Mrs. Woodbine, as soon as her visitor grew calm. "Left your husband! For what?" She looked sober.

"He positively forbade my coming to see you. That was going too far. I will not be

commanded as a slave! I am here, acting in open disobedience; and do not mean to return until he signifies his wish to have me do so promising, at the same time, to treat me as his equal in all things."

"Forbade your coming to see me! Or what ground, pray?" There was a stain of anger on the face of Mrs. Woodbine.

"Somebody has been making slanderous reports."

"About whom?" demanded Mrs. Woodbine, growing excited. Something looked out of her eyes at Madeline, which caused the latter's heart to shrink. She had never seen that expression in them before.

"I cannot tell," replied Madeline, in a confused way. "No name was mentioned."

"What was said?" The manner of Mrs. Woodbine grew hard and almost imperious.

"Nothing that in any way touched your reputation," answered Madeline, trying to soothe the anger which had been aroused.

"Who's then?" Still she was imperative; and still she looked down upon Madeline with that strange, evil gaze, which made her heart shrink and shudder.

"I cannot answer, because I do not know," replied Madeline, showing distress, and speaking in tones of deprecation. "I think it was more than half pretext on the part of my husband. He never liked our intimacy; and, finding that I was not going to give up my friends to gratify his whims and prejudices, has taken this course in order to effect his object. There is evil speaking everywhere. The best are not free from misrepresentation. Especially are women who take the independent stand you and others have taken, liable to false judgment. Somebody has spoken lightly of somebody who visits at your house—the light words repeated, have reached my husband's ears; this has given him a chance, as he supposes, to break up our intimacy. But he has not found me as clay in his fingers. It was a base pretence, I am satisfied—nothing more."

The evil look faded out of Mrs. Woodbine's eyes. Her face grew softer. She accepted the explanation. But, to Madeline, she did not assume the old cordial, winning air.

"I understand it all now," she gravely answered. "It was, as you affirm, a base thing in your husband. But, my child, you have taken a serious step. What do you propose? Have you friends who will receive you?" Mrs. Woodbine gazed searchingly into Mrs. Jansen's face.

"I trust that I am strong enough to be my own friend," bravely, and with just a pulse of indignation in her voice, replied Mrs. Jansen, even though her heart was growing like lead in her bosom. The change in this lady's manner struck her with a painful surprise.

"Of course you are—every true woman is strong enough for that." Mrs. Woodbine spoke with a certain air of approval, yet still with a reserve that chilled the feelings of her visitor. "And you are equal, I trust," she added, "to the contest on which you have entered. If your husband is the unemotional, strong-willed and wrong-willed man I think him, that contest must be a severe one, and may end in a permanent separation. Does he yet know of the step you purpose taking?"

"He will know of it when he returns home at dinner-time."

"Not till then?"

"No. He will find a letter, advising him of my purpose to live separate, unless he consent to treat me as an equal. If he ask me to return, I will go back and make a new trial. If he remains silent, the separation must be permanent. As I said to him, I will not live in strife, nor will I humble myself to the station of an inferior. Equal and peaceable, or not at all! He will be in no doubt of the issue when he reads my letter."

"I am afraid," answered Mrs. Woodbine, "that you have acted hastily. What if he make no reply?"

"I have counted that cost."

"Ah, indeed! Well, you will be rich in resources if you prove able to meet it."

"How so?" Madeline might well ask in surprise. What could be the meaning of this changed spirit in her friend—the friend who had first counselled resistance to her husband's encroachments, and so often urged her to maintain her womanly freedom? She was puzzled, hurt and distressed by a circumstance that seemed inexplicable. "How so?" she repeated.

"In the first place, you give up an elegant home, and money to any fair extent that you may see fit to demand. Have you rich relatives, who will, in turn, supply these? Your good name is to-day, unsullied before the world. Abandon your husband, on almost any pretext, and though your life be pure as an angel's, the soil of slander will be cast over your garments. You have now ease, comfort, and complete independence in worldly matters; how will it be if you cast them all behind? My dear young friend, you stand this hour in

the most momentous crisis of your life. Before Madeline could speak, Mrs. Woodbine would not have advised this step. As society is now constituted, the woman who breaks the marriage bond is misunderstood and misinterpreted. Public opinion ranges itself against her, and a hundred impediments are thrown in the way of her honorable independence. A man cast loose upon the world, if he have strength and will, finds all things conspiring to his success; but a woman so cast loose, finds all things conspiring against her. I speak soberly, my dear young friend, and earnestly, for I have a larger experience of the world than you. No—no! this is not the way. Hold to your legal position as Mr. Jansen's wife, but maintain your independence. If he seek to put on the tyrant, set him at naught, but hold to the material rights acquired in wedlock. If you abandon him, you abandon everything; but if he abandons you, the law will give alimony, and so leave you independent. You see, child, that I take a sober, common-sense view of things. I look to the main chance. Understand me; I counsel no submission. You are his equal, and if skilled in the use of your native strength, fairly matched with him in any contest he may precipitate. The home you purpose abandoning is as much yours as his. Don't lose the advantage its possession gives you. Put on triple armor for defence, if that be needed, call to your aid all a fertile woman's resources, as I have done, and victory will surely perch on your banners. But don't—don't take this hazardous step. Your husband is narrow in his views—cold and stubborn. I do not believe he will send or come for you. He thinks woman weak, and will trust to your repentance. To return to him after the final breach, would be a shame and a humiliation."

"I would die first," said Madeline, with aroused indignation.

Here the interview was interrupted by a visitor—a small, pale-faced, high-browed, dark-eyed woman, whose faded countenance yet self-reliant air, showed a person who had seen some service in the warfare of life.

"My dear Mrs. Windall," exclaimed Mrs. Woodbine, rising and advancing to meet her as she entered the drawing-room, "I'm so glad to see you this morning! Just in time to help me advise our young friend, Mrs. Jansen."

"Ah, Mrs. Jansen!" said the new comer, turning from Mrs. Woodbine—"I did not anticipate this pleasure. In trouble, child! What's happened?"

Before Madeline could speak, Mrs. Woodbine answered for her—

"Yes, she's in trouble, and we must see her through it, if possible."

"What kind of trouble?" asked Mrs. Windall.

"With her husband, of course. Oh, dear! these miserable husbands! they're the curse of our lives!"

A shadow dropped over the pale face of Mrs. Windall: her brows fell; her dark eyes grew intense; she looked angry—almost cruel—

"The curse of our lives! You may well say that." She spoke in a kind of panting undertone, like one in strong excitement.

"Well, dear?" turning to Madeline, "what's happened? A quarrel with your tyrant, of course! I can guess that much."

"We shall never quarrel again," replied Madeline, with a calmness of voice not expected by Mrs. Woodbine.

"Ha! what does that mean?" The eyes of Mrs. Windall flashed. There was apparent in her manner a thrill of excitement.

"It means that we have parted company," said Madeline.

"Of your own choice?"

"Yes; I will not be a slave, nor will I dwell with any man in perpetual strife."

"Spoken like a brave, true woman!" said Mrs. Windall, grasping Madeline's hand—"and I welcome you to the Sisterhood of those noble ones who can suffer, but not endure on your banners. It would be better for our sex if there were many, many more of your spirit. My ear catches the ring of the true metal, and the music is sweet. I kiss you, dear, brave young woman, and receive you into our circle."

And Mrs. Windall pressed her lips to Madeline's forehead. They were almost like the touch of marble lips—so cold—giving a chill instead of warmth.

"There is the cost to be counted," said Mrs. Woodbine, now interposing. "Always it is best to count the cost. Mrs. Jansen has left her husband. What next? Where is she going? What will she do? Who are her friends?"

"All true women are her friends," responded Mrs. Windall, becoming heroic in manner.

"She will need something beyond mere friendship."

"True friendship is full of service," answered Mrs. Windall.

"In my opinion," said Mrs. Woodbine, speaking in a firm, asserting tone of voice, "the highest office of friendship towards Mrs. Jansen is to advise her to go back to her home

and maintain her rights there. I have said this to her already, and my hope was that you would say the same. There she will possess all external advantages—every luxury and comfort she desires—a liberal supply of money—ease and independence, if she will assert and maintain it. There are plenty of ways in which a bright, resolute woman may rule, instead of being ruled by her husband, and thus hold in freedom all the advantages of her position. Go back, Mrs. Jansen; that is my advice.”

“I am not so mercenary as you seem to imagine,” replied Madeline, flashing her beautiful eyes into the face of Mrs. Woodbine. There was an air of defiance in this, quite offensive to the latter, whose love of having things her own way never calmly brooked a spirit of opposition. Madeline had been, up to this time, a docile learner in her new school of woman's rights; but now that she was asserting a right to think and act for herself, Mrs. Woodbine felt that her superior judgment was being set as naught, and this was more than she could calmly bear.

“But a great deal sillier than I imagined,” came in sharp retort from her lips. “You must live! How, pray? That's the question. Have you the answer ready?”

“The world is wide,” said Madeline, her tones less impassioned. “And I shall find my place in it. I am strong enough, I trust, both to do and to dare in whatever work or strife befall me. But, I will not dwell in contention with my husband. I hold the marriage bond as too holy a thing for this. I loved my husband—I still regard him above all other men”—her voice gave way, but she recovered it quickly, and went on—“and I will not meet him in open war, wounding and receiving wounds. There may be women who glory in battle; but I am not one of these. My spirit will not brook tyranny: so I flee from the tyrant's presence and seek to dwell in peace.”

“You are not a woman of my stamp,” retorted Mrs. Woodbine, with a half contemptuous motion of the head. “No tyrant shall drive me from the place assigned me by natural right, and by law. If the question come as to who will leave this house by voluntary act—my husband or me—be sure that I will remain at any cost. He can go if it so please him; but not I. I thought you had more pluck, child. Pshaw! Cast these romantic notions to the wind. Love! Don't talk of that. When a husband puts on the tyrant, love vanishes.”

Madeline had entered the house of Mrs. Woodbine, intending to remain there temporarily. She had expected a far different reception. Had looked for sympathy, succor, and encouragement. Alas! How suddenly this admired and almost worshipped friend had become transformed. Now, she arose, as if to depart.

“Don't go,” said Mrs. Woodbine. But there was no feeling in her voice—no actual invitation to remain.

Mrs. Windall arose at the same time. Her eyes were on the face of Madeline. She was reading it with keen, but sinister glances.

Mrs. Jansen did not reply to the remark of Mrs. Woodbine, but drew her shawl to her shoulders, and stepped back towards the door. Mrs. Windall did the same.

“My dear young friend! I trust you will reflect deeply on what you are about doing,” said Mrs. Woodbine, in a tone of warning. “Be advised by me. Go home. Sleep for another night on this question, remembering that it is to effect for good or ill your whole life. I am your friend. Don't forget this. Your true friend, who seeks to save you from calamity. Mrs. Windall! Join me in admonishing her to beware of a step, which, once taken, cannot be retraced, and may lead to untold evils.”

“Come home with me, dear,” said Mrs. Windall, turning to Madeline. “As Mrs. Woodbine intimates, the most vital things are concerned, and every step should be well considered. We will go over the whole matter together, and see what is best to be done. Trust me, Mrs. Woodbine”—looking towards that lady—“I will counsel her as faithfully as if she were my own child. Good morning! Come, dear?”

And without giving time for interposition, even if that had been in Mrs. Woodbine's thought, she hurried Madeline away.

“Faithfully!” Mrs. Woodbine spoke with herself, standing alone in her drawing-room. “Aye, as the hawk deals with the dove! Foolish young creature! I wish she were safely back in her home again. What strength has she for the battle that is before her?—what endurance for the storms that will beat upon her fair young head? Well! well! Some natures are incomprehensible! Some spirits move blindly upon ruin. You cannot counsel them—you cannot hold them back. As for Mrs. Jansen, I wash my hands clear of all responsibility. Be her future what it may, no blame shall rest at my door.”

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Home Teaching.

BY MARY J. CROSMAN.

Harry sat by the fire, his feet 'extended towards the grate, his chin resting on his bosom, and his thumbs revolving one about the other, as his manner was when new purposes were taking life, form and position in his brain. I'd hinted at new furs that morning, as I was pouring his third cup of coffee, saying they'd be a nice New Year's gift—that Mrs. Brown and Cousin Sue had just purchased some, and that I needed a set so much.

Possibly he was thinking of that now. A feeling of pleasure came over me, and my needle and thread flew more swiftly over the little merino dress sleeve I was making. I shouldn't need a new cloak now. The furs would save so much thought, and be so comfortable, and brother Joe's wife would half envy me. Out of the abundance of the heart I spoke—

"You're thinking of my New Year's gift, I expect?"

"Oh, don't refer to that," he said, in a half playful, half serious way, adding, by way of a caution to my hopes—"you forget how much higher rents are."

"Father said to me yesterday he'd pay the store rent if your profits were not as large as they had been."

"That's kind in him, but we must be independent."

A little silence followed, and then Harry added—

"You'd better get poor Mrs. Waite something for New Year's; she's been sick so long; and the Widow Green ought to be remembered; she is so worthy; and that old gentleman on South street, too—he is the most cheerful, thankful man in affliction I ever knew."

I felt too selfish just then to reply, and perhaps that was why he added, with so much emphasis—"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Perhaps my tones were a little ungracious as I replied, "I'd be satisfied with the receiver's blessing for once." Still his thumbs pursued their orbits with as little deviation as if forming a part of the solar system. I'd finished the sleeve, and was plaiting the little skirt, looking now and then out of the window, at the scudding, shifting clouds, which gave premonitions of the rain storm that Harry had felt for two days in that susceptible part of his body, the bones.

"Mehetible," said he, 'Hetty' he generally

calls me, "let's send for Aunt Susan to come up and spend New Year's."

I looked up in wonder. She hadn't darkened our door in four years—nor we hers.

"How poor, meagre and dwarfed are all our lives, when we have patterns of such wondrous beauty to weave into them—patterns which are worn in Heaven—devices that glitter upon the garments of martyrs, saints and angels! Christ stands at the path of obedience, and says—'This is the way, walk ye in it.' 'Follow Me,' is His command, and we follow our own fancy. I cannot see on what grounds we are hoping for forgiveness, when so little of the gospel spirit pervades us." There was something in his voice and eye that reminded me of the legends of saints—of Christians from whose death-beds we sometimes bring away a thought to last a lifetime; it seemed as though the divine eye and the divine voice had said to him—"Come and learn of me."

"Now," he continued, "let us bring our diseased, both of heart and brain, up to the healing Bethesda, that they may be made whole—that our lives may go out into the young year fresher, purer, and more Christ-like. God's paths are strewn with difficulties sometimes, but if we tread on and overcome, we show that we are His, and thus adding year to year, our lives will be crowned with that completeness which autumn gives to the earth. I can look onward with hope, but backward only with fear."

I brushed the mist from my eyes, thinking if Harry had cause to fear, how ought I to tremble and be afraid.

"Love one another as I have loved you." "Think of it, Hetty—your mother's own sister separated from us by trifles that have grown to mountain size—trifles, that like the deadly virus, have infused our hearts with the poison of hatred; and yet we bow to the same God, hope in the same Saviour, and are expecting to walk together the golden streets of Paradise—how is it?"

"We shall all be changed," I said, confusedly.

"Yes, I think we shall need to be; but that change must begin here—our thoughts and purposes must produce fruit."

"It's just the theory, Harry, but Aunt Susan seems so perfectly unforgiving—so selfish, and withal so self-important; I wouldn't treat a dog as she has treated me; and where will be my self-respect, to go cringing back for her favor—and where the good, when I dislike her so thoroughly?"

"Because she is a poor example, you choose to imitate her; because she has done so and so, you do likewise; I would advise you to stand on higher ground—to look upwards for your patterns, and Christ will bless you for it."

Memory led me into the past. "I remember when we were children." I said, "how delighted Jenny and I would be if mother told us we might go to Aunt Susan's and spend the day; and how happy we would be over the little pies and cakes she would bake us, the story books she would find in the old garret, and the swing she would coax uncle to make for us. She had an old crape dress and bonnet that was my great-grandmother's, and sometimes she would slip it on slyly, and make us a visit, while we would huddle away in one corner, half afraid, though understanding perfectly who it was. But those days have long since passed, and Jenny is with the angels, and I—I am hoping sometime to be there, too."

"Well, shall Aunt Susan and her family be among our guests on Thursday?" asked Harry, to which I heartily responded—

"Yes."

New Year's dawned, beautiful as are thoughts of forgiveness, and thoughts of mercy, charity and love. Aunt Susan was among the group of relatives that gathered around our table.

"Hetty," she said, as she was putting on her things to go, and there were tears in her eyes—"this is Christ-like—I feel ashamed—I should have been teacher, but it is you."

"It is Harry," I said; "he is my guide; he points out, and I follow—sometimes. I have found Aunt Susan, and am richly repaid."

She kissed me for the first time since Jenny's funeral. As the last carriage drove away, Mrs. Waite sent for me to come in, that she might express her joy and gratitude for the gifts I'd sent her. The Widow Green and the old gentleman on South street were none the less glad. It was almost ten—nearly time for prayers. Harry went into the closet in his quiet way, and brought out a box containing my furs. I could but be glad, and thank him ever so many times, but I speak truthfully when I say there was more exquisite joy in witnessing my sick friends' flush of pleasure, and Aunt Susan's tearful gratitude because I had given unasked forgiveness and goodwill.

Libbie's Lecture.

BY MRS. H. M. LADD WARNER.

"Burnt bread again!" exclaimed Mr. Haynes, pushing away the slice he had taken, with a gesture of impatience. "I really do wish, Mary, that you would pay a little more attention to your culinary duties. Everything is either overdone or underdone. If anything in the world annoys me, it is dinners got up in this manner."

Mrs. Haynes's pale face flushed up a little; perhaps the heightened color was occasioned by the rebuke—perhaps by an emotion of shame, on hearing her husband utter a falsehood; for Mr. Haynes's assertion was thoroughly false. A poorly cooked meal was a thing of very rare occurrence in his wife's well regulated household.

Libbie fidgeted in her chair a moment, and then spoke out quite bluntly—

"It was you that burned the bread, father, you know mother never burns her bread!"

"I burned the bread, child! How could I burn the bread?"

"By neglecting to fasten the carriage-house door. Little Jamie climbed into the carriage—fell out, and cut his head badly on the wheel. While we were dressing the wound, the bread was burned."

"For mercy sake, Mary!" ejaculated Mr. Haynes, "why do you persist in allowing that child to play in the back yard?"

"Why, father!" said Libbie, "you told mother only yesterday to allow him to play in the back yard every forenoon." Mr. Haynes pretended not to have heard his daughter's last assertion, but inquired where Jamie was. He was in his crib. He had cried himself to sleep.

That evening Mr. Haynes came home in unusual spirits.

"Libbie," said he, as soon as he entered the supper-room, "what do you suppose brought Henry Fuller to my office this afternoon?"

"How can I tell," Libbie replied, with glowing cheek. "Legal business, no doubt."

"Now, Libbie, you do not speak frankly," said her father, laughing. "He came to ask permission to address Miss Libbie Haynes as his future wife. He is respectably connected—has a good income—is very moral—and—I told him he had my hearty approval; has he yours, my daughter?"

"No, father," Libbie replied in rather a hesitating voice.

"Why, Libbie!" ejaculated Mr. Haynes, in a surprised, interrogating way. "I thought you liked him."

"Well, then, I do," she replied, speaking out honestly, though a flush of maiden shame suffused her cheek. "But I have decided never to marry."

"Decided never to marry!" repeated her father. "What has occasioned such a resolution?"

"A fear lest my husband should make me as miserable as you do my dear, patient mother," she answered, speaking very hurriedly, lest her courage might give way.

"I make your mother miserable?" exclaimed Mr. Haynes, looking like just what he felt himself to be, a much injured man.

"Yes, you make mother very miserable. Only think how unjustly you spoke to her at dinner to-day; and you know she always makes excellent bread. Then you declared that everything was either overdone or underdone, and she had been to so much trouble to prepare your favorite dish. You never commend any effort she makes to please you, although she is constantly consulting your tastes and caprices. Hers is a life of perpetual sacrifice—yours of continual exaction." Mr. Haynes walked hurriedly about the room. Libbie went up to him, laid her hand on his arm and continued very meekly—"Dear father, I know this rebuke is very rude and unbecoming from the lips of a child; but you demanded my reasons, and this has troubled me so long. Will you forgive me, father?"

"Yes, yes, child; but go away now. I am sure I never thought of this. Why has your mother never spoken of it, if she finds me arbitrary and exacting?"

"Because she fears you, father."

"Fears me, Libbie? as though I chastised her."

"You do, father."

"Libbie! you will certainly make me angry."

"But, father, you do chastise her, daily. Sometimes with the eye; sometimes with words; besides, accidents occasioned by your own neglect, you invariably lay at her door. How it grieves me to see my strong father burden my weak mother with all his own omissions of duty. Yes, I am positive I will never marry until I am satisfied that my husband will commend as well as condemn." Mr. Haynes did not come down to tea that evening. He had a miserable headache, and stayed in the library. Libbie understood the headache;

and she had some misgivings about the course she had pursued, and worried herself not a little about what she termed her unfilial lecture.

The next morning at breakfast there was nothing in Mr. Haynes's manner indicating a memory of the conversation of the foregoing evening; only when he did not take his third cup of coffee, and his wife timidly asked if he found it unpalatable, he replied, quite earnestly—"O! no, it is very good," and really added, "You know you make excellent coffee, Mary." She did know it, certainly, for her taste was quite as delicate as her husband's; but she could not repress a slight manifestation of surprise, blended with gratitude, on hearing the first commendation since the honey-moon.

In the evening, when Henry Fuller called, Mr. Haynes and Libbie were sole occupants of the parlor.

"Henry," said the former, as soon as salutations were exchanged, "what do you suppose Libbie has been saying?" Without waiting for a reply he continued—"She declares she will never marry until she is positive that her husband will commend her success in any undertaking, as well as to condemn any failure she may unfortunately meet with."

"She is quite right," said Henry, very gravely. "My mother has just been speaking to me on the same subject. She assures me it is habitual with married men to allow others to praise their wives, while they reserve to themselves the prerogative of rebuking and condemning them for every peccadillo which comes under their Argus eye. I, too, have noticed these things in my brief experience; but if Libbie should give her happiness into my keeping, I trust I shall not play the exacting and arbitrary master, but the friend and adviser. Counselling, if need be; listening to admonitions from her if circumstances render it necessary."

Libbie has finally decided to trust Henry. They have been two years married, and never yet has he complained, if ill-luck occasionally attends her efforts in the kitchen. Mr. Haynes is decidedly an improved man, and confidently assures his wife, that Libbie's lecture opened his eyes, if it did inflict a poignant wound at the time.

Out in the World.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER IX.

Mrs. Windall was, as we have said, a small, pale-faced woman, with dark keen eyes and a high forehead. She was rather showily dressed, in cheap, faded finery, the soils and creases therein marking her as an untidy person. She was one of those who, affecting a scorn for things feminine, have yet a weak love for gaudy attire, but neither taste nor neatness. So in her wardrobe she made herself noticeable, but did not elicit admiration. Years before she had quarreled with her husband, and they had ever since lived separately. As to the blame, it was about equally divided. Both had hung out false colors, she pretending to be an heiress, and he a thriving man of business. The mutual cheat was never forgiven on either side, and after a brief but stormy attempt to live before the world as man and wife, they had broken their fetters and swept asunder.

Previous to her marriage, Mrs. Windall

had lived with a distant relative; but, on separating from her husband, the door of her old home did not open for her again. The fact was, she had been a burden to this relative, who felt no inclination to take it up again. Mrs. Windall, therefore, in leaving her husband, went out into the world alone. Just how she had managed to live for the past five or six years, no one knew. Frequent changes of boarding places, left with some the inference that she was either difficult to please, or for some cause was not considered a desirable guest. The truth was, she had a slender purse, and did not pay as she went. The question of ways and means had become one of vital interest to Mrs. Windall. She would not, however, descend into any of the vulgarly useful employments, preferring to get money through appeals to sympathetic strangers, in whom she managed to excite pity for her wrongs and destitution. She had "boarded round" and "begged round" in Philadelphia for nearly two years, until she became so well known that both doors and sympathy were shut against her. Then she found means to procure from three clergymen and two editors, letters of introduction to as many individuals in Boston of the same professions, whither she went, and on the strength of these introductions, managed to get into respectable society. But she was both a moth and a drone, consuming yet not producing. For a time, she interested people of some cultivation, for her mind was active, and she was a fluent talker. In Boston, she met with a number of men and women who were absorbed in social theories, joined their circle, and for awhile became a leader among them. Gradually, however, something in her was felt as repulsive. The circle did not harmonize with Mrs. Windall so near the centre, and by tacit consent, she was gradually pressed to the circumference. She could talk glibly of "broad humanities;" of "noble aims and ends;" of their "high mission in the world;" of the "new gospel" they were sent to preach; but those who had the means of knowing her best, saw that she was idle and selfish—a taker on all sides, but not a giver.

For over two years Mrs. Windall managed to keep afloat in Boston; then she found it necessary to emigrate. Gradually the circle of her friends had diminished, and as it lessened, the character of her associates were of a lower grade. Light scandals touched her fame—whether justly or not, we cannot affirm. In the end, a few weak but well-meaning

individuals, who pitied her destitution, obtained for her letters introductory, and a sum of money, with which she passed to New York. Here she had flourished for a while, but was now getting to be so well understood, that she found it difficult to hold her own.

Such in brief was the woman into whose hands Mrs. Jansen had fallen. Coldly had the friend on whom Madeline counted turned from her—the very friend who had first taught her the new doctrines of equality and independence, on which she was now acting—the friend on whom she had counted for everything in this the great crisis of her life, turned from and left her with a woman whose sphere had always been repellant, and holding by whose hand she was now stepping out into an unknown and untried world. The air of this new region struck upon her with a chill, and she felt an inward shudder as she walked away from Mrs. Woodbine's door, accompanied by Mrs. Windall. Had she been alone, most likely her feet would have turned back towards her own house. But she was committed to a degree that left retreat out of the question. She was too young and too strong in her self-will for a cool counting of the cost—for that sober reflection and hesitation which years of life-experiences, with their sufferings, are sure to bring. Pride was a dominant passion—this also held her to the course upon which she had so madly entered.

Mrs. Windall was boarding at No. — Washington street, in a house and neighborhood quite below the range of respectability in which Mrs. Jansen had been living with her husband. The latter held back, and gave her companion a look of surprised inquiry, as they stopped before a dingy dwelling.

"This is my home for the present, dear," said Mrs. Windall, with an encouraging smile. "Not as elegant as I could desire, but the people are so very kind that I can't take heart to leave them. Come!"

Mrs. Windall's hand was already on the bell. Madeline felt an impulse to turn away, and run as if for life; but she had not strength enough to break the spell that was upon her, and so stood passive, with her eyes cast down and half-closed, instinctively shutting away the unpleasing objects that were before them.

"Come, dear!" The door had been opened by a sharp looking Irish girl, who glanced keenly at Mrs. Jansen as she entered on this invitation of her friend.

"Is my room in order, Kitty?" asked Mrs. Windall, when they stood in the narrow hall,

the atmosphere of which was heavy with dining-room and kitchen odors.

"No ma'am," answered Kitty, with a curt-ness of tone that did not escape Mrs. Jansen.

"Will you put it in order right away, Kitty?"

Kitty did not give a verbal negative, but her manner said emphatically—"No!"

"Walk into the parlor, Mrs. Jansen," said Mrs. Windall, turning from the servant, whose sharp, curious eyes had already closely scanned the visitor's face.

The parlor was a small front room, of cheerless aspect. The air was close and impure, the furniture dingy, the painted walls dirty with head and hand marks. An old sofa, with a broken spring shining through the rent haircloth, stood on one side. In the centre was a small round mahogany table, on which was a carcel lamp, surmounted by a globe, cracked on one side, and with a crescent-shaped piece scalloped out of the top. The odor of sperm oil struck the nostrils as the eyes rested on this lamp. It was not imagination. Five ancient looking stuffed chairs were ranged about the apartment. The carpet, of English Brussels, had once been handsome; but that was a long time ago. It would have been difficult now to make out the figure clearly, the pile was so completely worn off in large spots, thus exposing the coarse grain of the canvas. Painted shades, which could hardly have seen less than ten years' service, darkened the windows. On the mantelpiece stood a small French clock, the pendulum motionless. This article of ornament was flanked by two small, curiously spotted shells, the only clean and fresh looking things in the room. A few pictures, so called by courtesy, hung on the walls, the most noticeable being a savage looking Judith and Holofernes.

"We'll sit here for a short time, until the servant gets my room ready," said Mrs. Windall, taking off her bonnet, and tossing it in a careless way on to the table, where stood the carcel lamp, untrimmed since the last night's burning. If it came off free of an oil spot, so much might be counted as gain. "She didn't expect me home so soon, or it would have been all right. When I go out in the morning I hardly ever get home until dinner-time. And now, my child, while waiting for Kitty, we can talk."

Mrs. Jansen glanced towards the folding doors, that stood closed between the front and back rooms.

"There's no one there," said Mrs. Windall, understanding the significance of the glance.

A movement in the adjoining room contradicted her assertion, and she dropped her voice, as she remarked—

"Only a servant, I presume. But, we can talk low. And now let me repeat the assurances already made, that I am your friend, and feel deeply interested in your case. Do you know, dear, I've always felt drawn towards you. There's something about you so frank and outspoken—so womanly and so independent—so true to yourself. The step you are taking is a most painful one; but it is in pain that higher principles are born. We must go through the fire to purification. We must get strength for noble work by braving the tempest. Dear, dear child! don't give way to a weakness that is unworthy of the duty to which you are called!"

Poor Madeline! Her heart had failed her. Looking into the face of things as they were beginning to present themselves, she shuddered in affright. Her answer to Mrs. Windall was a trio of sobs, and a gush of tears.

"I know it is a hard thing for you, my dear," said Mrs. Windall, in a tenderly sympathizing voice, drawing an arm as she spoke around Mrs. Jansen. "So young—so hopeful—so loving, yet so terribly disappointed! These wrongs to our sex set my blood on fire. I grow fierce with indignation when I see them. Poor child! This is but a momentary weakness. I understand how it is, for have I not also been in the furnace? You will be stronger in a little while."

"It is cruel—so cruel!" murmured Mrs. Jansen.

"All men are cruel. It is their nature," said Mrs. Windall. "Flatter them—yield to them in everything—call black white to humor their whims, and they can be as gentle as lambs; but set yourself in opposition; dare to call your soul your own, and instantly the fangs are seen. But you haven't told me all about this unhappy affair. I could only get vague hints from our conversation at Mrs. Woodbine's. And, by the way, Mrs. Woodbine acted very strangely. I thought more highly of her. To recommend you to go back, just for the sake of money and position! But you answered her nobly! Your language thrilled me with pleasure. I said, what a grand young soul! There was in your words the inspiration of a high purpose. I felt that the priestess for our new temple had come. And so I drew you away from the unworthy contact of such a woman as Mrs. Woodbine."

This speech was not without influence on

Mrs. Jansen. She was pleased rather than disgusted, and so made blind instead of clear-seeing in regard to her friend. Her emotion had already subsided; calmness and strength were born of momentary weakness.

"How was it? Tell me all," said Mrs. Windall, resuming. "Trust me, as one who loves you—as one who will make your cause her own—as a daughter would trust her mother."

Mrs. Windall could attract strongly. If one came fully within her sphere, that one was captive, at least for a time. Already Madeline was beginning to feel the influence of this subtle sphere. As she looked into the woman's face, its expression changed. What had been hard and repellant, was softened by more graceful lines. There was tenderness in the cold dark eyes, from whose strange intenseness she had so often turned away with an inward shiver. Madeline was in her power.

"Tell me all," repeated Mrs. Windall. Her tones had in them now more of command than solicitation—not offensive command, but that expectation of consent, which, from its subtlety, is so much more certain to prevail. And Madeline opened all her heart. She kept back nothing.

"Now I can advise you understandingly," said Mrs. Windall, when in full possession of the case. "Of course you cannot go back, unless your husband consents to the equality you have demanded. That would be to sink below the former level you held in his house. It would be acknowledging yourself an inferior—a serf, a slave. He would be tenfold more the tyrant. No—no; you have entered a path in which there is no turning back without loss of everything a woman holds dear. And now, let me ask a plain question or two as to your connections and prospects outside of your husband. The better I understand things, you see, the better I can advise you. What of your relatives?"

"Apart from my husband," replied Mrs. Jansen, "I am nearly alone in the world."

"Ah!" There was a certain spring in Mrs. Windall's voice that indicated satisfaction.

"I lived with an aunt, my only near relative, at the time of my marriage. She has since died," added Mrs. Jansen.

"Have you an income?—Anything in your own right?"

"Nothing."

"So you stand alone in the world, trusting in your own strength?"

"Alone!" How the word echoed through all the chambers of Madeline's soul.

"And yet not alone," said Mrs. Windall. "As I have already affirmed, all true women are your friends; and you will find many noble spirits drawing to your side. They will encompass you as a defensive wall."

The parlor door was open at this moment by Kitty, who had altered her first intention about Mrs. Windall's chamber.

"Your room is ready, ma'am," she said, with less curttness of speech than she had used when the ladies first came in.

"Oh! Thank you, Kitty," returned Mrs. Windall, with considerable blandness of manner.

After obtaining a good look at the visitor, the observant Kitty retired.

The apartment to which Mrs. Jansen now ascended, was in the third story, back. Its furniture was in the ordinary style of second and third class boarding houses—meagre, dingy, cheerless. A cherry four poster, of scant dimensions and obsolete style, occupied a portion of the chamber. The bed was thin and covered by a faded calico spread, patched here and there with pieces of different patterns. There was no bureau. Two large trunks were, instead, the repositories of Mrs. Windall's clothing. A cheap mahogany framed glass hung against the wall, under which was placed a high and narrow pine dressing table. Two chairs, a small writing or work-table, a strip of carpet before the bed, a common maple washstand, and green paper blinds at the windows, made up the complement of furniture.

"It isn't very elegant," said Mrs. Windall, as she ushered her almost shrinking companion into this comfortless apartment. "But," she added, with affected indifference towards external things, "not in our surroundings does the heart find rest and satisfaction. Sweet peace, contentment, delight, come by an inner way. The poet who said, 'My mind my kingdom is,' understood life's true philosophy. How often do I repeat the words! How often have I repeated them in this poor little room, and felt their sublime meaning."

As she spoke, Mrs. Windall untied Madeline's bonnet strings and removed her bonnet. The unhappy young creature was stunned and passive. She felt herself in a weird atmosphere, every breath of which fed a strange, scarcely real life. There was a spell on her, which it seemed impossible to break. She distinctly recognized a power in this woman against which she had not, in the present,

strength to act. She felt herself like a broker branch on a stream, borne away she knew not whither.

"Don't look so miserable, dear," said Mrs. Windall, seeing in Mrs. Jansen's face a picture of wretchedness and vague alarm. "The first sharp pain will soon be over. Then you will feel calm, strong, and full of self-confidence! I have gone by this way, and know every foot of the ground. It leads to freedom—to self-repose—to honorable independence. Only the first steps are painful and difficult."

Mrs. Jansen did not reply. After her bonnet and shawl had been laid off, she sat down by one of the windows and looked out. The prospect was neither soothing nor elevating. Dirty brick walls, chimneys, roofs—a dull sky overhead—below, not a green thing. It was a glimpse of New York out of a back third story window on the east side of Washington street. A dreary gaze—shut eyes for a little while—then Mrs. Jansen turned from the prospect without to the one within. The room seemed more desolate and repulsive than at the first glance. It was a comfortless cell compared to the luxurious chamber she had, until within a few hours, called her own. What a heavy weight rested on her bosom! She almost panted for breath. It seemed as if something were crushing her life out. Then came a strong impulse to break away—to run from this woman as from an enemy, and from this close room as from a prison. She even rose with a sudden resoluteness of manner, and crossed towards the bed on which her shawl and bonnet were lying. Mrs. Windall, who was on the alert, read what was passing in her mind, and moving quickly to her side, drew an arm around her, and said—

"And now, dear, going back to the subject of our conversation when Kitty interrupted us, take heart in the assurance that you do not stand alone. That all true women are your friends, and that purer and nobler spirits than you have yet known, will come to your side and claim you as a sister. Sit down again. I have a world of things to say."

And Mrs. Jansen, weak and bewildered, sat down; or, to speak more truly, permitted herself to be borne down upon the chair from which she had just arisen.

"And first, dear Mrs. Jansen! let me offer, with a free and loving heart, to share my poor room with you for a little while, until better arrangements can be made. A season of quiet is essential in your present state of mind. You need not join the family. I will arrange

to have your meals sent up. Just as long as you may wish, shall you remain in perfect seclusion. In the mean time, we can survey the whole ground and determine your best course."

Mrs. Jansen, whose eyes had fallen to the floor, did not look up nor respond. She was thinking of the letter she had left for her husband, and whether he would send an answer. How was she to get the answer, if it were sent? She had given the number of Mrs. Woodbine's house, as that to which any communication for her should be directed. Could she go there again, after what had passed between her and Mrs. Woodbine? She felt, with keenness, the altered tone of this friend, upon whom she had counted for almost everything. She was hurt, alienated, offended. When she passed through her door, on retiring, she had resolved never to reënter it again. Of course, Mrs. Windall would call for her on the next day, and inquire for a letter! but, there came a hesitation in her thought—a certain want of confidence was felt. Though captive, in a degree, to the stronger will of Mrs. Windall, the instincts of her purer nature warned her against implicit trust. No, she did not wish any communication from her husband to get into the hands of this woman; nor, in case a letter was received, did she wish to read it in her presence. In such a case, she felt that she would not be free to act as her own heart and judgment might dictate.

"You do not answer me," said Mrs. Windall, breaking in upon Madeline's perplexed thoughts. There was just a shade of offended pride in her voice.

"Forgive me, my kind friend," answered Mrs. Jansen, rousing herself. She shivered as if a cold wind had blown upon her. "Be patient with me. I do not see clearly."

"No mother could be more patient, or more loving than I will be, dear Mrs. Jansen! It is because my heart is so full of your case, that I seem to be intrusive. I know how it is with you. I see just where you stand, and see, also, the way opening easily before you. Ah, dear, if your eyes could perceive what is so plain to mine! But that, in your present state, is impossible."

Mrs. Windall drew an arm around Madeline and kissed her. How cold the lips were! They sent a chill down her nerves.

Weak—passive—silent. The strength, born of indignant purpose; the half heroic enthusiasm which had led Mrs. Jansen out from the home of her husband; the dominant will,

ready to accept anything but submission—were all failing now, as she stood face to face with these first repulsive facts of her new life. Anything so poor, so mean, so circumscribed as this chamber of her friend, had not come within the range of her anticipation. Sacrifice; endurance; self-dependence; stern conflict in the life-battle that was before her, going out thus alone into the world, she had nerved herself to accept. But in so far as imagination had realized anything as actual, there was in its pictures of the future a certain grandness and heroism, with its poetical compensations, that would give strength to a nature like hers. And here, at the initial step, as if to drive her back, she was met by a coarse and offensive reality, the first contact with which filled her with disgust. The admonition would have been effectual, had she not been under the influence of a will more subtle and powerful than her own. Weak—passive—silent she became, after a single effort to break away; and when, perceiving this state, Mrs. Windall urged her to lie down, she made no resistance.

After her head was upon the pillow, Mrs. Windall sat close beside her. Madeline shut her eyes and turned partly away. Her face was pale; her eyelids wet; her mouth full of sadness. Now a change flashed over Mrs. Windall's faded countenance—there was a gleam in her eyes—and the signs of an eager purpose about her thin, cold lips. With a repressed movement, she extended one of her hands, and laid it gently on Madeline's forehead. For nearly a minute she did not move this hand; then the fingers stirred, just as if the motion were involuntary. After that, she stroked the damp hair softly, gradually extending the touch down to the temples on each side. This was continued for some time, Mrs. Jansen remaining quiet. If the half-unconscious woman, lying there with closed lids, could have seen the countenance of Mrs. Windall as it was now, she would have started up and fled in terror from the room. But she was fast losing herself. The motion of Mrs. Windall's hand went on, gradually increasing in quickness, while her eyes fixed themselves with a snake-like intensity upon Madeline. Five, ten, fifteen, twenty minutes elapsed, and still the hand of Mrs. Windall stroked the forehead and temple of the motionless woman lying before her—the expression of her face increasing all the while in its intense eagerness. At last she paused, still with her weird eyes on Madeline, and her hand held a few

inches above the head she had been caressing. All remained silent as death. Even the breathing of Mrs. Windall was suppressed. Now she stood up and bent over, so as to get a full view of Madeline's face. The result was satisfactory. A light flashed into her countenance, a strange, unnatural, evil light. Again she laid her hand on her head, and as she did so, called her name in a low voice; but no response came. Then an arm was gently lifted—it remained, as raised, after being released, not falling back upon the bed by its own weight. Mrs. Windall pressed upon the arm, and it went down slowly. Again that gleam of light flashed over the woman's face which was full of conscious power. An eager thrill of triumph seemed to pervade her soul. Her slight form swelled into fuller proportions.

"Mine!" she ejaculated, in a whisper. "Mine!" And still she stood looking greedily at the unconscious Madeline—a dove just flown from her cage, and so soon in the hawk's talons!

CHAPTER X.

The whole aspect of Mrs. Windall was changed. At a first glance, even one quite familiar with her appearance might have failed in a clear recognition. Usually, there was about her an air of repose. Life did not flush the external of her being, but held itself, like a hidden spring, in fulness at the centre. Now it was leaping along her veins in unwonted currents, while every nerve was in a thrill. As she stood erect above the unconscious Mrs. Jansen, every part of her body was in motion, with that billowy grace seen in wild animals of the feline species; while her face glowed with an evil radiance. She stood over Madeline for a little while, and then crossed to the window, looked out for a moment; then turned and went back to the bed again—still with that rippling, springy grace of motion to which we have referred. Her eyes glanced towards her victim as she turned, with that glittering eagerness seen in the cat's eyes, half cruel, when she sports with her prey.

As if to re-assure herself that Mrs. Jansen was completely spell-bound, she called her in a low voice; but the ears were dead to external sounds. Then she laid her hand on her temples—then lifted her passive arms, that retained, like pieces of wax, any position she gave them. A fuller satisfaction flushed her pale face—a keener delight burned in her calm, dark eyes—through every limb and

muscle ran a stronger billowy motion. She was graceful in attitude as a wild beast.

This flushing of all the externals of Mrs. Windall's life, consequent on gaining power over a weaker soul, whom she meant to render obedient to sinister purposes, continued for nearly an hour. During this long period, she was in almost constant motion, exhibiting the restlessness of a caged beast. Every now and then, she would stand over Madeline, and look upon her with an expression of intense satisfaction. There was no pity, no sympathy, no compassion in her cold face. She did not think of what suffering might lay in the path she was marking out in thought for this young creature's feet; but only of gain to herself.

After an hour, her exhilarant state passed, and Mrs. Windhall became reflective. She sat down a little way from the bed, assuming in a short time the attitude of one who had pondered deeply. Sometimes her head moved in assent to a hidden thought, or slowly signed a negative, as some result was reached that did not find approval. And still the death-like sleeper lay with soul and sense imprisoned.

Almost another hour elapsed without change. At the end of that period Mrs. Windall stood over Madeline, not in the fearful aspect she had borne since the beginning of this infernal rite, but with her usual countenance, softened by looks of kindness. There were a few quiet passes and touches, and calls made in tones of tender interest; when the long still lashes quivered, the lips moved, the whole body showed a thrill of returning life.

"Dear Mrs. Jansen!" a mother's voice could hardly have so abounded in love as the voice of Mrs. Windall. "How sweetly you have slept."

Mrs. Jansen started up and looked around her in a scared way.

"Have you been dreaming, dear?" asked Mrs. Windall.

"Dreaming! dreaming!" murmured Mrs. Jansen, as one still but half awake. She looked strangely about the room, then timidly at Mrs. Windall.

"What a sweet sleep you have had! I've been watching you for more than an hour. I never saw anything so peaceful. It was like an infant's slumber." Mrs. Windall's arm was already around Madeline, who first shrank away, and then permitted herself to be drawn close to her side.

There came a rap at the door, which a moment afterwards was pushed open, and Kitty's sharp face peered in.

"Did you call, ma'am?" asked the servant, and as she spoke she advanced her body into the room, and fixed her intelligent eyes on Mrs. Jansen.

"No, Kitty," answered Mrs. Windall, in a slightly annoyed manner—"I didn't call, and don't want anything."

"Will the lady stay to dinner, and shall I have a place for her?" Kitty held her ground, in spite of Mrs. Windall's intimation that she could retire.

"Oh, no—no," answered Mrs. Jansen, "I shall not stay to dinner. Is it so late?"

"It's going near on till two o'clock, ma'am," said Kitty.

"Impossible!" And Mrs. Jansen drew out her watch.

"How strange!" she ejaculated—"Nearly two, as I live, and I thought it was scarcely twelve."

Kitty's eyes, full of curious interest, were reading every line and expression of Mrs. Jansen's beautiful young face.

"Yes ma'am," said the girl, "it's nearly two, and we have dinner at the hour. Shall I bring you up something?"

"No, thank you. Have I slept long?" And Madeline turned to Mrs. Windall.

"You can go down, Kitty," said the last-named person. "I did not call you. If my friend takes dinner with me, I will see to it. There—then—" she added, in an imperative manner, as the girl still lingered. Kitty, with a look on her face that did not escape Mrs. Jansen, went out slowly.

"The most provoking girl I ever saw!" exclaimed Mrs. Windall, angrily, as Kitty shut the door. "She's always prowling about, and thrusting herself upon you in and out of season. But if you really want anything, she is very sure to have other engagements. Were you asleep long? Yes, dear. You slept for nearly two hours, and lay so quiet and peaceful that I could not find it in my heart to awaken you. You went go down to dinner?"

"Oh, no—no, Mrs. Windall; I couldn't eat a mouthful."

"I'll have your dinner sent up."

"No, no; I would choke if I attempted to eat."

"But you can't go without food, dear. I'll find something delicate at the table, and bring it to you myself."

Mrs. Jansen only turned her head partly away, with that air of aversion which we sometimes see in the sick when pressed to take food. She had been sitting, since roused from her

unnatural sleep, on the bed. Now rising, she walked in an unsteady way across the room, and stood at the window, from which she had already obtained so dreary a prospect of roofs and chimneys.

"I think," she said, turning suddenly around, "that I will——" As suddenly as she had begun did Mrs. Jansen check herself.

"Will what?" asked Mrs. Windall.

"Oh, nothing; it was a mere thought," replied Madeline.

Mrs. Windall's forehead contracted. She looked sharply at Mrs. Jansen.

"Don't be afraid to speak out with me," she said. "I am your friend in everything. If you have doubts, questions, or rising purposes, don't hesitate about letting me see them. My heart is in your case, and I will counsel or lead you as if you were my own child."

But Mrs. Jansen did not reveal her thought. Nay, hid it in her mind with care, lest it should be discovered. In vain did Mrs. Windall persist in trying to get at the meaning of that quick decision of her young friend's mind—for she saw that a decision had been reached—Madeline baffled her in every effort.

The loud clamor of a bell, jarring through the hall and stairways, announced dinner.

"You will not go down?" said Mrs. Windall.

"No."

"I will bring you up something."

Mrs. Jansen shook her head.

"But you must take food. A cup of tea and a piece of toast, if nothing else. Shall I bring these?"

"I'll take some tea," said Mrs. Jansen, with the manner of one who wished to get rid of importunity.

The instant Mrs. Windall left the chamber, Madeline's face lighted with a purpose. She listened intently to the sound of her retreating footsteps, to the opening and shutting of chamber doors, and the confused noise of feet down the stairs and along the passages. In a few moments all was still again. Now she got up quickly, and after a hurried arrangement of her hair, put on her shawl and bonnet. Her hand was on the door, which she pulled softly ajar. As she did so, her quick ear caught the sound of light ascending feet. Starting back, she threw off the bonnet and shawl, tossing them to the farther side of the bed from which she had taken them, and was sitting with an apparently absorbed air near

the window, when Mrs. Windall opened the door and came in.

"They have some nice roasted fowl on the table," she said. "Now do let me send you a piece."

Mrs. Jansen shook her head, replying—

"No, Mrs. Windall; I cannot eat a mouthful. But, if it is not too much trouble, you may have a cup of tea made, and bring it up when you are through with dinner."

"And a piece of toast."

"Yes, yes; if I can eat it, I will."

Mrs. Windall lingered for some moments, like one haunted with suspicions, and only half satisfied. With quick but cautious glances, she surveyed the room, to see if there had been any change since she went down stairs. None met her eyes.

"I will bring the tea and toast in a little while," she said, as she moved back.

"Oh, thank you. Perhaps I will feel better afterwards."

Mrs. Windall went out, shutting the door. The instant Mrs. Jansen was alone, a quiver ran through her frame, and her stooping body lifted itself to a firm erectness. She turned an ear, listening intently. Not the slightest sound was heard. Was Mrs. Windall just outside of the door, or had she gone down with noiseless steps? A minute, that seemed like five minutes, passed before Mrs. Jansen stirred from where she sat. Then she went to the door, and opening it softly, peered out. There was no one in the passage. She stepped from the room, and moved to the head of the stairway. All was deserted and still. Assured of this, she went back quickly, and catching up her bonnet and shawl, drew them on, with scarcely a moment's pause for right adjustment. The finest ear would scarcely have detected her footfalls as she glided down the stairs. Unobserved, she had nearly reached the lower passage, when she heard some one coming up quickly from the basement, where the dining-room was located. Pausing, she held her breath, in a strange kind of fear. She felt like a criminal in the act of escape, and about suffering detection: All her mind was in confusion. A moment of suspense, and Kitty, the Irish girl, appeared. Mrs. Jansen put her finger to her lip. The servant understood her, and nodded a quick assurance.

"Don't tell Mrs. Windall that I am going," whispered Mrs. Jansen.

"Deed ma'am, I won't!" Kitty answered back in a whisper. "She's a horrid thing,

any how," looking the disgust she felt, "and we all wish her a thousand miles from here. But get away with you, and don't be lingering. It's just my guess that she put you to sleep to-day. I've heard that she can do such things. Ough! I'd as soon let a snake touch me!"

"Kitty!" It was the voice of Mrs. Windall, calling up from the basement. At the same time, she was heard ascending.

"Go!" said the girl to Mrs. Jansen—"go right away; I'll keep her down there until you get out of the front door."

"Who were you talking to?" Madeline heard Mrs. Windall ask, as Kitty met her half way down the basement stairway. She needed no further incitement, but was in the street before Kitty, who had blocked up the stairs in front of Mrs. Windall, had given her evasive answer.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Ralph Hoag's Cure.

BY PAUL LAURIE.

CHAPTER I.

"Was you speaking to me?"

"Yes, sir; I was. Come here."

"Well, sir."

"Don't you *well* me, young man," said Mr. Hoag, in a rage, bending a withering look upon the handsome boy before him. Then clenching his right hand, sinking the nails into the palm (he had a habit of doing that when very much excited—one of those involuntary habits so easily taken up, and which we all find so difficult to lay aside), and drawing his erect figure up still more stiffly as he continued—

"Sit down there. Your conduct of late has been disgraceful; disgraceful in the extreme."

"Disgraceful, father?"

"I warn you not to repeat my words."

"My dear father!"

"Stop, stop! Don't you *my dear* me, Ralph. I say you are a blot upon the family; you, my oldest, with everything to encourage you; to elevate you; to make you a respectable man. Whether it was books, clothes, or pocket-money (and you certainly had your share of the last), you had whatever you wanted. Your horse, and your fashionable amusements, till you squandered more in an hour than I

ever spent in a week when I was your age. And then, as if that were not bad enough, you top the whole by making a beast of yourself!" I say," exclaimed Mr. Hoag, in a still louder tone, "you have been making a *beast of yourself!*" Then extending his arm towards the culprit, he added in a hissing tone, "I could wish in my heart you had never been born."

The boy, who till now had sat like one stupefied under the torrent of reproaches hurled upon him, suddenly rose, and looked at his father in a strange, half frightened way. The father still regarded him with the repelling, we had almost said scornful gaze that had gradually settled upon his face, while uttering his stinging rebuke.

"Well, father!"

"Well, sir!" interrupted the father, with biting sarcasm.

"I am listening."

"See that you do. Now, sir, I want you to understand me. Hereafter you are to devote your *whole* time to your studies, to the desk or"—the father paused a moment, then resumed in dead level tones,—"*or else* you leave my house. Those are my terms. Your mother is not here to cloak your villainy."

"I am not a villain," replied the boy hotly. "I know I have done wrong; but"—

"*Silence!* not a word. I am tempted to disown you this moment."

"I will save you the trouble. I will relieve you of my presence." And ere Mr. Hoag could prevent him, Ralph advanced to the door, opened it hastily and rushed out of the room; but only to stagger against Mrs. Hoag, who was standing near the entrance, and whose frantic cry, "O! Ralph, *Ralph, Ralph!*" brought a dash of blinding tears to his eyes. She held him in her arms, sobbing, when the door was again opened, and Mr. Hoag came out with a stern, relentless countenance.

"Martha! let him go."

That was sufficient; the mother's arms fell heavily; but her tears only fell the faster. She clasped her hands involuntarily as she leaned slightly towards the stern face; but never ventured to look up as she murmured—

"Only this once, Samuel."

"No! not this once, even, *Martha!*"

The last was uttered in a sharp, commanding tone, as the frantic mother reached out her arms to her boy, who now stood surveying his father calmly with wet, but flashing eyes. The mother's voice broke out in a low wail as she sank into a seat and covered her face with her hands. One, and only one look did Ralph

date to give her; his last was hazarded at his father as he half sidled, half backed out of the hall; it was an unnatural look, and one that haunted the father many years afterwards—the next moment the door closed between Ralph Hoag and all that was dear to him. Did I say dear? I should have added and to all that was holy; for few boys revered their mothers as Ralph Hoag revered his.

The door closed with a bang; an ominous bang that sent a chill to his heart. He paused one moment as he thought of the friends he would encounter in going down the street; then fixing his nervous hands deep in his coat pockets, and compressing his lips he descended the steps rapidly and walked away, with that strange expression upon his face which was so deeply impressed upon his father's memory, never to be effaced; an expression of intense pride and scorn such as you have seen given to Lucifer by the old masters.

CHAPTER II.

"How you shock us! That was a terrible scene, and *hardly* natural. Such things *surely* must be rare indeed!—such an unnatural father, and such a *wretched* temper! Come, give us something more like *nature*, now!"

I beg your pardon, reader. Then you have never witnessed these displays of temper. And you cannot recall, just now, the memory of any one who left his or her father's roof on account of a quarrel? Ah! you *do* remember that frightful case the other day, where a young man was found dead in a barn, suspended by a piece of rope which he had taken from his little brother's sled. And you *were* very much shocked then, and you felt nervous all that day, and inexpressibly sad. Yes, and now you are thinking of that terrible occurrence we all talked so much about only a month ago, when that young girl threw herself from the suspension bridge, "in a fit of mental derangement," it was said, "brought on by family troubles." You think, after all, that such things *do* sometimes occur.

Reader, pray that they may never occur with you.

The door closed upon Ralph Hoag with an ominous bang. Mrs. Hoag sat weeping silently. Mr. Hoag returned to the sitting-room, and flung himself into a chair, then got up to look for a valuable document; then went as if to lift his hat, but changing his mind again, walked to his private desk, and rummaged among his papers, while Mrs. Hoag continued

to cry silently in the hall. And while she was crying there, I will go back a few years, to the time when Ralph Hoag was a mere child, and Mrs. Hoag a comparatively happy mother. She had only discovered that her husband, a man of spotless reputation and possessing decided talent, was also the possessor of an ungovernable temper. When her mother was living, Mr. Hoag never exhibited this quite so plainly. There was occasionally a cloud in the sky—a mere cat's paw on the surface of the water. But after the demise of his mother-in-law, Mr. Hoag's manner underwent a change. This was exhibited in a striking manner one day, about a very trifling matter—the matter of a shirt button. When his wife failed to reply to his remark promptly, he threw the garment upon the floor, and angrily demanded another, that could claim at least *one* button. Afterwards, he relieved his mind by rebuking his wife for her *slothful* neglect, and stalked out of the house, regardless of his child's innocent attempts to attract his attention. A trifle, and one that he soon forgot, for he had the grace to apologize for his harshness afterwards. But that was the beginning of the bad temper.

When his business and family increased, the former absorbed his mind to the utter neglect of the latter, as is commonly the case. His children's gambols worried him; their noise interfered with his nice calculations. He wished they were machines, and could be wound up in such a way as to be let down into his presence only at meal time, on Sundays, and certain set occasions. Not that he ever expressed himself thus; only his *manner* always indicated the thought. Nor was he without affection. Mr. Hoag loved his wife and his children—after a fashion. He was always spoken of as an "excellent provider." He was candid, straight-forward and honest in business; latterly, an elder in the church, which his energy and stubborn perseverance had freed from a debt that had well nigh toppled it over; "a man of wealth and liberality," it was said in the city of P——, which boasted of its towering church spires and towering Christianity.

But his love for his children! That was always a marvel to me—I had almost said problem! To Mrs. Hoag was left the care of the family, Mr. Hoag doubtless deeming *his* share done, when a handful of money was left in his wife's palm "to buy toys, playthings, books, or anything the children wanted, from a kite to a rocking-horse." As for him, he

had "no patience" with children; they were always in the way. [Reader, mark well the parent, man or woman, whose conduct and language exhibits want of cordiality—of sympathy with children—with their sports and griefs. There is something radically wrong when the heart fails to respond to the glee of an innocent child; it is no sign of a healthy heart-beat when even a child's sorrow is passed over lightly or unheeded.]

To be brief, Mr. Hoag forgot his own children while attending to a growing business, and the state of society in—the Oquibaby Islands, I think; however, the name is of no importance. But the morals of those Islanders shocked Mr. Hoag to that degree that he prepared an Address to the Benevolent-Minded of P—— on the subject, and expended at least five hundred dollars in the attempt to ameliorate the condition of the poor people, while Ralph, his oldest child, a boy of eleven, excelled all others of his age in P—— in turning somersaults and hand-springs, after the manner of successful tumblers in the circus.

When Ralph turned fifteen, his father desired him to give a "little time" to the store; but the time devoted to business was, so very "little," that it might be said, as Mr. Hoag's senior clerk expressed it, "hardly worth reckoning up." For Ralph was very fond of amusement, and having an abundance of pocket money, he managed to enjoy himself famously, as young men frequently do in similar circumstances. And then he was very fond of books (of which he had a fine collection) and of music. To his mother he was all submission and tenderness; he revered her slightest wish. But he never hazarded a freedom with his father—never could be himself in his father's presence, even so little as to laugh naturally, feeling a want of sympathy on his father's part. Of course, there were times when a word of admonishment was not unnecessary; but at such times, the manner of Mr. Hoag was so stern and repelling, that Mrs. Hoag, fearing the bad effect of such reproofs, naturally strove, with all a mother's arts, to prevent their recurrence. Once, and only once, did she regret her action: When seeking to draw Mr. Hoag's attention upon herself, and thereby drawing it from her son, she unwittingly added fuel to the flame. Her husband's wrath was violent, and wholly unrestrained. Afterwards, when they were alone, he expressed himself pointedly in reference to what he termed her unwarrantable interference.

But to come to the cause of the quarrel which drove Ralph Hoag from his father's house. There was in P—— a celebrated fishing club, composed of forty members, Ralph Hoag was the youngest member of this club, and rumor said, one of the liveliest. Upon the occasion of their return to the city after a very successful trip, which occupied five days, seven of the party, Ralph Hoag among the number, indulged rather freely in wine. Coming through the city, the gay party desired some music, (it was at night, and near ten o'clock) and procuring some musical instruments, with Ralph Hoag leading off on the violin, the party drove to the club room, followed by a merry crowd of men and boys, who were attracted by the rare turn-out and the really good music. A harmless bit of fun as ever amused a ready audience. About eighteen of the club had been out, and now they were returning in two spring wagons, that containing the happy musicians, ahead. Not a rude remark, not an indecent action—simply hearty laughter, caught up and echoed by the idle crowd. It was even a question whether the music would not have been dispensed at as cheap a rate whether the wine had been consumed or not; there were many in that same party who loved a joke well enough to play for a time the organ grinder or wandering minstrel. Indeed, even Mr. Hoag deemed the affair so innocent that he was heard to laugh heartily as the party passed his door, and in reply to the remark of a gentleman with whom he was conversing (the Rev. Asa Hopewell, the pastor of a fashionable church), "Don't you think those young men have been drinking?" he said, "Perhaps so, but they appear to be enjoying themselves." It was not till noon on the following day that he learned that *his* son, Ralph Hoag, was one of the musicians. Then his *pride* probed him. That *his* son should lower himself before the public. He had almost forgotten that Ralph belonged to the club; but now—well, he would put a stop to it at once.

The reader has seen the sort of stopper he made.

CHAPTER III.

"My dear mistress, *don't*, now, because, do you know, I had a drama the other night, and by that same token I know it will all come right; so there's no need o' frettin' wan's self over it," said Nancy O'Neil, Mrs. Hoag's best "help," who, having a message for her mistress, found her sitting in the hall, with her

handkerchief soaking with tears. Miss Nancy was a shrewd observer, and arrived at the proper conclusion with the first glance.

"What do you want, Nancy?" said Mrs. Hoag, not daring to lift her head, lest the swollen eyes should be discovered.

"Mrs. Pritchard's man is here for those seeds; but it isn't that. I come to tell you that Mary Middleton is not expected to live many minutes. Susy called to me in the garden, and so I thought I would hurry and tell you, knowin' you would like to go in."

"Yes, I will go at once. It was very thoughtful of you, Nancy. There!" crushing back her tears with an effort, as she rose and went to her room, pausing a moment with averted face, to say—"tell the man to wait a few minutes—or, you will find the seed in the lumber room, I think, in a round box."

"Poor woman!" said Nancy O'Neil to herself, as she walked away thoughtfully—"it's little the world knows of *your* trials. Well, well! *some* hearts will be wrung sorely if this is to keep on; but then I often misdoubt if there be much *heart* about him, though I can't say but he seems a proper nice man, barrin' that he's so forgetful. He don't remember that he was a boy himself once—sure am I that that's the trouble this hour. A quarrel, likely—one of his lectures, an' Ralph's off in the sulks. Well, well, an' the boy so clever, an' as pleasant as a May morn, with his joke and winning way of askin' favors. It is never I want so an' so, *you* Nancy, like that Tom Clark; but, 'Will you have the kindness, Nancy?' or, 'I'll be obliged to you for such a thing.'" And Miss O'Neil resumed her work, repeating—"Well, well indeed."

While her mistress bathed her eyes and forgot her own sorrow in the effort to console her nearest neighbor for the loss of her eldest daughter.

When she returned from the house of mourning, the overpowering thought that perhaps she had lost her eldest son, caused her tears to flow afresh. Mr. Hoag, who was in the room looking over his papers and pacing the room alternately, seeing her tears, remarked—

"Martha, I think you are worrying yourself needlessly, if you think that boy will remain away many days; that is not *my* opinion."

But his wife did not venture to reply, although she believed that 'that boy' would never darken her door again until the father sent after him. Notwithstanding two hours had elapsed since the scene occurred, she felt

so nervous that she could not compose herself to work. The remainder of the afternoon she passed in her chamber. This was anything but agreeable to her husband, who felt that this was in some degree a reflection upon him; but for once he was wise enough to hold his peace.

The following day, about noon, Mrs. Hoag learned that her son had left the city early in the morning, after passing the night with an old chum. The news came through Nancy O'Neil's brother, a young carpenter, who was employed about the railroad depot, and who was the last to shake hands with the determined boy. The sorrowing mother immediately communicated the tidings to her husband. He listened quietly, merely replying, when she was through—

"Gone, is he? The obstinate boy! Well, Martha, he will be back before long."

Of what avail was pleading there? The mother could only weep and pray.

Six months rolled around before they heard from their son; at the end of that time, a relative of Mr. Hoag's visited P——, who brought the first information concerning Ralph's whereabouts. He had heard of Ralph casually, while passing through St. Louis, had called on him, and found him in a respectable house, occupying the position of cashier, at a barely living salary. Mr. Hoag's first thought was to go after him; but upon second thought, he concluded to write to him, and enclose a check for two or three hundred dollars, that the boy might pay any debts he had contracted, obtain such things as he might need, and return home immediately. In vain Mrs. Hoag urged him to go after him. She argued, that a boy who had managed to get along six months independent of their aid, would in all probability consider himself worth going after if his company was desired. Failing to move her husband from his purpose, she proposed going herself. To this her husband returned a positive and stern refusal. So the letter was mailed with the check, and Ralph Hoag was astonished one morning upon receiving two letters from his parents. To say that the boy was overjoyed, would fall far short of the exact truth. He wept blinding tears over his mother's letter, kissed it passionately, read and re-read it, and then opened his father's letter. But here a change came over him. Tears he shed, it is true; but they sprang not from the sweet well that overflowed when reading his mother's letter. Alas! no; they were bitter. The bank check lay unnoticed

before him as he gave the letter a second reading; and then, for the first time, he doubted his father's love. His thoughts were—

"If my father felt as my mother feels, he would not send me money—he would come after me. My father forgets that he closed his door against me. I am *not* so bad but I might be reclaimed; and—well, I *did* look for something different, when they found where I was. But no! I shall not go back. My poor, suffering mother! I am worse than a brute. I *know* it, still I *cannot* go back to P——."

And thus it happened that about the time Mr. Hoag expected his son home (we need not say that Mrs. Hoag was disappointed) a letter came instead, and in it the check. The letter was couched in very respectful language, with just the slightest dash of independence glimmering through it. He thanked his father for his kindness, but he was free from debt, with a very fair salary. There came another letter though, to Mrs. Hoag, which breathed nothing but love, filial tenderness, and regret for the "evil pride"—so the boy worded it—"which separated him from her whom he loved more than all the earth." Mrs. Hoag carried that letter in her bosom many days. Afterwards, when her son wrote regularly, that first letter was laid away carefully, to be taken up and re-read when her heart was more than usually moved by doubts and fears.

Mr. Hoag's refusal to go to his son was the great mistake of his life—a mistake that he perceived when it was too late to remedy the evil. To have his kindness rejected—his free forgiveness overlooked; and that, too, by the very person whose right to question his actions could not, in the nature of things, be permitted, even for a moment. Oh, really, he could not see but wrong *must* ensue, if he "gave in" to that stubborn boy. But when a year rolled around, and hints came to them of their son's irregular life, he became alarmed. Then he had to satisfy himself of the truth or falsehood of the reports. To do this, he addressed a letter to an eminent lawyer of St. Louis, an intimate friend. The reply to that letter fairly stunned him. The conclusion, in particular, shocked the father inexpressibly.

"Perhaps there may be a mistake. The person named made his first appearance at the theatre about the beginning of February; and from yours it appears that your son was then engaged in the house of Throck & Co. However, I will make suitable inquiries at once. But I can state positively that he is not in the house last-mentioned, nor has

not been there during the last three months. Messrs. B—— & H——, I am sorry to say, did not evince a readiness to talk about him, from which I infer that your apprehensions are not wholly groundless."

With a groan of anguish, the father dropped the unwelcome letter on the floor, and covered his face with his hands, shedding tears for the first time in twenty years. He did not, however, lose much time in weeping; whatever his intentions were, he determined to carry them out immediately. Giving some necessary orders to his head clerk, he left the office hurriedly, walking swiftly home, where he met his wife attired as if for visiting. She paused at the door, turning to him, wistfully.

"I am going to St. Louis, Martha—will you see that my valise is packed? But, no; I may as well take a trunk."

"Is there anything wrong? What is it, Samuel?" inquired the wife, in a quivering voice. "You have had bad news! Is Ralph ill?—or—oh, Samuel!" And Mrs. Hoag burst into a flood of tears.

Mr. Hoag bowed his head on his hands.

"Ah, I see it is not sickness—it is something worse! May the Almighty grant me strength to bear it!" sobbed the mother, as she drew off her gloves, and left the apartment mechanically.

An hour later, Mr. Hoag was on his way to St. Louis. He did not acquaint his wife with the contents of the letter he had received, but saying that he had reason to believe that all they had heard of their son was true, he was determined to try to bring him home.

Mrs. Hoag sent up an inward prayer, as she looked over her little family that evening, and at bed-time the youngest, a little fairy of three years, put her arms around her mother's neck, affectionately saying—

"P'ease don't, ma! Ma spoil eyes! Wee-enty Bit's don't to p'ay for her Ralph to-night."

"I don't like Ralph," said a five-year-old boy, who was coming up for the good-night kiss, turning to his little sister, shortly—"he makes mother cry so."

"You's bad, then. See 'at, ma!"

Mrs. Hoag rained a shower of kisses on the little lips.

"Kiss me, too; I'll never say it again," said the crestfallen boy.

So that even the three-year-old caught a glimpse of the skeleton in the house that night.

When Mr. Hoag reached St. Louis, he went direct to the manager of the —— Theatre. Upon inquiring for "a person named Hoag," the manager bestowed a scrutinizing glance upon him.

"Have you any business with Mr. Hoag?"

"He is my son," replied the father, with a blush of mortified pride; but determined to let the manager know that he was not to be trifled with.

"Oh, indeed! Happy to see you, Mr. Hoag; but of course you are aware that your son has only been known to the public as Mr. ——," mentioning a name that attracted great attention at that time. "Your son will make his mark one day—if he would only study a little more. However, we must make some allowances—young men *will* be young men, you know; and then Ralph is so confidently good looking, and——" But something in the father's face arrested him, and the manager twirled his moustache meditatively—

"Can I see Ralph *now*?"

"In a moment, Mr. Hoag. Collins, see if Mr. —— is in. He may be in his box." And the manager turned around to talk to a tradesman, carelessly. Ralph was not in his box, but chatting flippantly with the comic singer of the stock, and his daughter, a bold-looking ballet dancer, when Collins said—

"Here is a gentleman wishes to see you, Mr. ——," and went off, leaving Ralph face to face with his father.

The young man's face flushed red and purple, then as suddenly paled; but not a word could he utter. His father gazed upon him angrily at first; then extending his hand, involuntarily placed the other over his eyes, from which the tears coursed silently. The comic singer and his daughter walked away, leaving them alone.

"Ah, my son! have you so fallen, then? I never could have believed it of you, Ralph."

Ralph said not a word.

"Will you give it up, Ralph, if I forget the past—and we will never allude to it again. Ah, that *my* boy should resort to the stage!"

Still never a word from Ralph.

"Do you ever think of your poor mother, boy?"

Ralph's lips quivered; he turned aside, hastily.

"For her sake, if not for mine, give up this life. You shall have everything you want—that heart could wish, if you only change

your associates. But you say nothing—nothing!" And the miserable parent clutched at a chair, staggered, steadied himself a moment, then sat down heavily.

"I—I suppose *I am* changed," at last said the son, in a low tone, and as if talking to himself, holding a hand across his forehead, and gazing intently on the floor. "My God! how *I have* changed! When I look back——" He paused and shuddered, then resumed, still speaking to himself—"Still, I might turn over a new leaf. I am quite young, and——"

"Yes, yes," interrupted his father, "you are quite young. Come along with me—come at once, or I will not have the courage to meet your mother."

That word, "mother," produced a magical effect. Ralph permitted his father to lead him out of the theatre, and to his hotel, where he at once left him in conversation with an old friend, while Mr. Hoag made preparations for their return home.

I will not attempt to describe the greeting Ralph encountered, from his mother down to "Wee'nty Bit." The light came back to Mrs. Hoag's eyes, and even Nancy O'Neil's song was more cheery, as she bustled about her work. But alas! the fond mother's hopes were doomed to a sad disappointment. Ere a month rolled around, Ralph betrayed his love of strong drink.

One night, when he remained out later than usual, Mrs. Hoag under pretence of looking over affairs in the kitchen, awaited his coming, not without an ill-defined feeling of dread. When at last her son came, he was staggering under the influence of the liquor he had imbibed with some boon companions. He managed to stammer out—

"Wha—what you do—doin' up so late for, mo—mother? Hic!—waitin'—waitin' *me*? 'M sorry, 'cos it's un—unnecessel'y." And the young drunkard dropped heavily upon a chair.

"That Ralph Hoag, her handsome, intelligent boy, her first born!—and in such a condition! A DRUNKARD! Then God help her! the worst had come, and it *was* true, that which she had heard; but which she could never believe." You who see the drunkard reeling home, and whose memories cannot testify to the sorrow of a household, the utter desolation which follows the indulgence of that awful propensity, you cannot imagine that poor mother's sorrow. But had the desolating angel robbed her of every child she possessed, she could have submitted to it with more resignation

than to this affliction. Guiding him, talking to him, quieting his babbling tongue, she put him in his own room, and then retired. But there was no rest for her that night. When morning came, the repentant son went to her and acknowledged his fault freely. He "hoped" he would never cause her such misery again. It was the old story over again. Some friends had tempted him to drink; he drank rather freely, &c., &c. Poor Mrs. Hoag; she believed him; for he was always truthful. But scarcely a week elapsed until he was brought home, totally unable to walk, and in a filthy condition. This time there was no help for it. Mr. Hoag was there to receive his drunken son. And very soon it became a matter of common talk. Very many good people wondered why it was that Elder Hoag's son should turn out so bad. They thought it singular that the best of men, such as elders and ministers, should have such wild sons. Mr. Hoag's very particular friends felt it incumbent upon them to sympathize with him while endeavoring to console him, and one or two conscientious individuals called upon Mrs. Hoag upon a similar errand. "As if," to use Nancy O'Neil's words, "they couldn't look at the short-comings of their own, bad cess to them! If Ralph *did* take a drop too much, sure an' they that drew on the black face at it might turn it betimes on their own ne'er-do-wells."

It had come out at last that Ralph had been on the stage, and that he had imbibed a love of drink shortly after his departure from home. People predicted a drunkard's grave for him; some few blamed his father as the sole cause of it; and all shook their heads as if it was an exceedingly bad case. And the last conclusion was not far from the truth. Ralph's resolutions were broken almost daily. The love of drink was his ruler. In vain his father plead and threatened by turns. His mother's tears, though they were mixed with his own, had no longer a restraining influence. Ralph Hoag settled into a confirmed drinker. It was a long time before his father's hopes died out; but when at the end of eighteen months he gave up hoping, he resolved to turn his worthless son out of doors. He reasoned that, perhaps when left wholly to himself he would appreciate his condition, and seek to mend it. So, one morning he took his son aside and acquainted him, in calm tones, of his firm resolution. Ralph, who was now wholly lost to shame, gave a dry laugh as he turned away, saying, "Bully for you! I admire

your spirit, I am rather disagreeable, that's a fact, especially when the church people happen to meet me. So, good bye.—No! O! well, if you don't want to shake hands it's no matter to me. I guess I can live—not so drunk but what I know what I'm about. I'm off, you see." And the inebriate stalked away with the air of a lord, that is, a *drunken* lord. But notwithstanding his good bye, he ventured back again within the week under the cover of darkness, and to "borrow" a trifle from his poor mother. We need not say where the trifle went. When men become drunkards their sense of honor is lost; they have been known to steal from fathers, mothers, sisters, wives, and even children. To *borrow* is nothing, although the money can only be obtained at the expense of a lie, well told.

Now, I must admit that, although Ralph when but seventeen possessed a generous heart and a mind of a very high order, at twenty no one could perceive the slightest evidence of either. That is the saddest thing about the business, after all. Every vestige of manly honor fades away before the love of drink: those who were gentle become coarse and cruel; the upright dishonest; the truly refined like to the beasts. Ralph Hoag's case was pointed out as a warning to young men. Men would point him out to their sons, saying—

"Look there! There was as bright a boy as the town could claim; see what he has sunk to—he warned."

Of course, when his father perceived that his son would *not* rely upon himself, but preferred rather the abuse of a bar-tender, so that he could but indulge his appetite, he took him home once more, and there he played the sot to perfection. Abusing every one within his reach, from his heart-broken mother down to his little sister, who approached him with extended arms and mouth upturned for a kiss. No one escaped him. When they ceased to trust him with the veriest trifle of money, his rage became awful, his profanity heart-chilling. Such bitter invective; such terrible sarcasm! Till, at last, those who reared him prayed that he might die rather than lead the life he led. For, at the end of three years, the once handsome, graceful and intellectual Ralph Hoag became a grovelling *beast*!

CHAPTER V.

"I'll do it—if I don't! I've about stood the pressure long enough,—affects my constitution *rather* seriously. I'm not disposed to

submit to them much longer; 'ud rather enter the Involuntary State Asylum for life, so's I could get my regular three drinks a day; ho! he! ho! Stop; let's calculate; three drinks a day, regularly; and liquor's *only* fifteen cents a quart, (prime article, too!) lemme see. Why, I could do on a dime a day! But—them! they even deny me that little! Seems to me suthin's decidedly wrong—*does* now; boxin' me up, watching me like a hawk, keepin' the small change under lock and key—if it aint a shame! I *wont* submit to it. Ah! I've been a precious fool, *haren't* I! Why didn't I think of it long ago? Yes, I'll do it! — if I don't!"

"Good Mr. Ralph, wont you go away now," plead Miss O'Neil, coming into the kitchen at that moment. "See! it's eleven this blessed minute; go on now, that's a kind fellow. I *know* you'll please me."

"You do? Pshaw! now I'll trouble you for the proof, Nancy. What do you want?" (crossly) "Am I in your road?" Then with an oath, "Go to bed! I don't want *your* interference."

Nancy was glad to escape, leaving the drunkard grumbling and dozing over the kitchen stove. When he was alone, the drunkard aroused himself, went to a closet and began to eat. (Your confirmed toper is always a glutton.) After eating as much as might suffice two ordinary men, he lifted the lamp, meditated a moment, as if debating some question inwardly; then with a scornful laugh, proceeded to the door of his mother's chamber. Setting down the lamp cautiously, he opened the door noiselessly, and advanced into the room on tiptoe. It is wonderful how cunning your seemingly stupid drunkard becomes when in pursuit of that which will secure him his object. On the present occasion, Ralph Hoag was very successful in removing a bunch of keys from *beneath his mother's pillow*, and that pillow wet with the tears shed for him only that night. The keys in his possession, with a smile of grim satisfaction he left the room, closing the door after him. Pausing a short while on the outside, he descended slowly and carefully to the sitting-room, in which his mother usually did her sewing, and in which stood his father's secretary. Placing the lamp carefully where he could have the benefit of its light, he fumbled among the keys, muttering to himself in a dissatisfied way—

"Pshaw! certainly, I've as good a right to it as any one. Supposin' he was to drop off some day; I wonder if I wouldn't come in for

a big share? Then what's the use of debating the question? I've gone over the whole ground once, (did I say *I'd* gone over the ground, te-ho! he! he! Come! I'm too witty entirely, as Nancy says); so, where's the use repeatin' the arguments. The court decided in my favor, so—here goes! The wrong key: might a knowd it—le's try this. Ah! there you are, my beauty; and now for—Hello! what's this?" and the robber paused with drunken gravity as a little parcel, carefully tied with a red ribbon, rolled out of a small drawer and down upon the floor at his feet.

"Some of the old woman's fineries, I guess: like as not her weddin' veil. Lemme see!" and stooping, he picked the parcel up between his thumb and forefinger, eyeing it curiously, with that maudlin leer common to the drunkard. "Superfine, no doubt. The governor was rich when he was *my* age, consequently this must be a rich present. Well," in a grumbling tone, and with an oath, "it's little I've had to spend in *that* way. They take devilish good care not to bother *me* in selectin' handsome presents for the ladies. Small loss, tho'—but I wonder what it is."

The ribbon was pulled off roughly, with a jerk; the paper torn open rudely, when a child's shoe was exposed. Although worn, it was still shapely, with as bright a color, (red) as when first made. The drunkard gazed at it with an amused smile; turned it over, and held it out on his dexter finger, turning it over and over, and over again, with that comical, quizzical smile on his face.

"An' where in all the world did *you* come from? Don't remember as I've had the honor of seeing you before. Blood relations, tho', I've not the slightest doubt—we've both got *rather* florid complexions—you've been shelved, an' so'm I; you're not of the *slightest* earthly account, an'—an' so'm I. Now, I just wonder where the foot was; *who* it belonged to when *you* played a part on this stage—'cos it was something *rather* neat. O! you have 'a story to unfold' about yourself, I see," drawing, as he spoke, a slip of gilt edged paper out of the shoe. "Now for your 'veritable history.' 'RALPH'S FIRST SHOE!—*from sister Mary!*' Why, if it aint *mine!*'"

The young man looked grave, stroked the shoe soberly, examined it closely, laid it down, picked it up, laid it down a second time; and took it up a third time.

"I must have been *very* small when I wore that—somehow, can't realize ever being *quite* so diminutive; but it must have been, never-

thelless. From Aunt Mary! I liked her—*she* was an angel—the very best woman that ever lived. But, pshaw! What am I crying for! I'm a blamed fool! I'm getting chicken-hearted. Aunt Mary's present; she who used to say I'd go up high some day—I'm about as low as a man can go now—up among the towering intellects—and more of such 'stuff.' But she was mother's best friend, and mine. Hang it!—*she* was everybody's friend. How old could I have been then? A matter of five or six months, not more. And, of course, in my mother's arms. What *did* I look like—the first, too—they must have thought the world and all of me. Seems to me as if I can feel my mother throwing me up in her arms and kissing me on the cheeks. Does so!" and the wretched drunkard sobbed aloud. "Yes, I wasn't a *thing* then—somebody always predicting good of me—and here I am robbing my own father! I wonder if there ever *was* a scoundrel like me."

As the remorseful drunkard wept scalding tears, a little hand was laid on his arm, and looking down at his side he beheld his youngest sister. "Wee'enty Bit!" he exclaimed.

"O! Ralph, don't be cross with Wee'enty Bit. I heard you coming into the room. I was afraid of something—you wout be angry and say bad words—so I followed you." Ralph gazed down upon her in silence. "Are you angry—because, I'll go right off to bed again."

"And you have been watching me all this time?"

"Yes—I couldn't help it—kiss me, Ralph, *do*!"

The brother's arms were around her in an instant.

"Wee'enty Bit!"

"Well, tell me."

"Do you see that shoe?"

"Yes; what a dear little thing it is, to be sure; just big enough for my doll."

"It has saved me—made me think how cross I've been to you and everybody else."

"Then you'll never be so again—will you?" said the child, quickly, looking up at him in a surprised way. O! I'm so glad. Wont it be nice!"

The only answer was a shower of tears. After a long pause—

"Wee'enty Bit!"

"Well."

"Will you go to bed now, and—and never say anything about what you've seen to-night?"

"To be sure. I'm no tell-tale."

"There, then; and God bless you and make me a good brother to you. And now, we'll both go to bed."

* * * * *

"Don't you think there is something odd about Ralph—a sort of a sneaking look in his eyes of late?" said Mr. Hoag to his wife one evening, as they sat alone, the children having gone to bed, and the eldest girl being out on a visit. Mrs. Hoag sighed as she answered—

"I noticed something unusual, I thought. I think he has not tasted anything this week—f it would only continue so; but, there is no hope of that."

"No!" replied her husband, sighing in his turn. "And sometimes I believe it is a judgment upon me for my cruel treatment of the boy in the beginning." He had never expressed himself like that before; Mrs. Hoag wondered what was coming next. "Ralph was not a bad boy. I think he was as well disposed as any child I ever knew; but I made a sad blunder when I forbade him the house for a trifling misdemeanor. I have never quite forgot his look when I ordered him out."

"Well," said his wife, as the tears coursed slowly down her cheeks, "we will have to be doubly careful of the rest, and, who knows! perhaps God *may* change Ralph's heart."

"I cannot deceive myself," replied the husband. "This fit wout last long—he will be tormenting the whole neighborhood to-morrow in all likelihood."

But for once the father was agreeably disappointed. Ralph absented himself from the house, it is true; but he came home sober. Where he went, no one knew; but a great change came over him. People began to remark it, and many were the predictions and surmises thereat. When, at the end of three weeks, Ralph's manner resumed its old tone and bearing, his father broached the subject, rather timidly it is true, to his son, and requested him to confide in him, assuring him how earnestly he would second his efforts to rid himself of his evil propensity.

"I rely on the Almighty alone to assist me in freeing myself from the evil. I have resolved *firmly* never to touch the accursed poison so long as I retain my senses. I am in my sober senses now—you can tell my mother so. You have borne with everything—*don't* everything that mortal *could* do. Now it is in God's own hands."

Imagine the father's astonishment at this unexpected reply. He pressed his son's hand

warmly, while a new hope swelled his heart. At the end of a month, Ralph announced his intention to read law with an eminent jurist who resided in the city. He had been reviewing some of his studies, he said, and felt his ground—he had faith in himself now, and with the Almighty's assistance he hoped to retrieve his lost character. If he could only do that, even, it would be something to be thankful for.

And from that hour he never tasted spiritous liquors. Years have rolled around since that resolution was formed, and to-day Ralph Hoag's name stands high on the scroll of fame. His father and mother passed away, after beholding him occupying a judge's seat, and hearing his name in connection with all that was gentle, temperate, noble and merciful. But to his mother alone did he reveal the secret of his salvation—how, when everything else failed, he was saved by the flood of recollections that were awakened by the sight of his first shoe.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' TREASURY.: Out on the Pond.

Townsend, Virginia F

Arthur's Home Magazine (1861-1870); Apr 1863; 21, American Periodicals

pg. 246

BOYS' AND GIRLS' TREASURY.

Out on the Pond.

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

"Oh, Sallie, it'll be splendid!" said Donald Avon, to his little cousin, whom he had been visiting in the great city, feasting his eyes and feeding his thoughts with the wonderful sights that met him on every side, for Donald Avon was one of those bright, quick, inquisitive urchins, who never let anything in the world escape them.

So, from morning until night, this boy from the country was busy and intent watching the great

yellow omnibuses, with the drivers perched high on top, as they rumbled and thundered by his uncle's door; peering into all the shop windows, with their wonderful array of all strange and beautiful things; visiting the galleries of paintings, where the pictures held him for once bound and still, with their marvellous fascination and loveliness; and at night watching the gas-lighter, as he came up the street with his small ladder, which he sat down so quick and hard against every post, and then sprang lightly up, and opened the small glass door of the great lamp, and lo! a large golden bee would sud-

denly shoot up and flutter inside ; and Donald would watch eagerly at the window as each bee spread its wings of flame down the street, until there was a long row of them, straight as a line of soldiers, farther than his eye could see, making a long golden perspective through the darkness.

So Donald saw all these things, and an innumerable host of others, which it would take my pen long to write of ; and your eyes, oh, dear children, would grow weary reading of them.

Donald Avon was over his eleventh birthday at the time of my writing, and Sallie, his little cousin, was a year younger. You would have liked this boy, I am sure, with his brave, bright face, his hazel eyes, with the light and the frolic always wide awake in them ; and in a different sort of way—a sweeter, more tender way, would you have liked Donald's little cousin, Sallie St. Clair. Her eyes were like the smile of the sky over the meadows of June ; her curls like sunbeams spilled out of the May ; and her lips—to what blush rose—to what opening bloom of fuchsia—to what glow of the queenly cactus, shall I compare the small red lips of Sallie St. Clair !

Her father and Donald's mother were brother and sister ; the former was a merchant in the city. Donald's father was a farmer, who lived in a large pleasant country house, in the midst of his broad wheat fields, and great orchards and meadows, carpeted every spring with the velvet of young May grasses.

Sallie went every summer to the farm-house. She loved it, this bright, sweet, happy little girl, better, than she loved anything on earth—the song of the robins in the great cherry trees, the clucks of chickens in the barn-yard, the spotted calf, the lambs, like small snow-drifts on the distant hills, all had a wonderful fascination for the little girl. She had never been at the farm-house in the winter, but Donald's mother had entreated that her little niece, of whom she was so fond, might return with her son, when his visit through the holidays was closed.

And Donald had drawn most attractive pictures of the country in the winter, until his little cousin seemed to see it all, lying under its bleached flannels of snow, and the sleds glancing like lightning down the hills, and the trees shining in the winter's morning in their diamonds and amethysts. But the imagination of Sallie St. Clair did mostly flower about a small pond beyond the orchard, where she had gone in the hot summer noons, and sat with Donald under the shade of the pines and the cedars, which through all the year stood like soldiers in dark green uniform, around the sheet of water. The pond was not more than a quarter of a mile long, and less than this in width, but it was deep, and sometimes in the summer moonlight the father and mother of Donald, with their son and niece, would go out in the little row boat, and sail up and down the pond.

And so this pond, beyond the orchard, was in the

thoughts of Sallie St. Clair like some wonderful land of enchantment—the brightest, and fairest, and happiest place in all the world. And this last day of her cousin's visit, the little girl sat on the sofa by his side, with a small, handsome pair of skates on her lap, while Donald held another pair in his hand of the same pattern, only almost as large again. And both of these pairs of skates were a present to the children from the kind and loving father of Sallie St. Clair. And so, after a long panegyric upon the skates and the pond, Donald lifted up his face, bright with anticipation and enthusiasm, and bro'te out with—

“ Oh, it'll be splendid, Sallie ! ”

“ I know it will, Donald ; ” and the face of the little girl repeated and emphasized in some finer way, the fervor of the boy's—“ I wish we were there this very minute.”

“ It isn't but a little while until to-morrow,” said Donald, consolingly.

And so, two days afterward, in the sharp, bright winter morning, these cousins, Donald and Sallie, went down over the thin white cambric of snow, which covered the earth, to the pond beyond the great orchard trees.

The cedars and the pines stood up as still and green as they stood in June, only every branch was hung with the white plumes, which the snow of the night before had hung there.

Donald had taken Sallie to the pond on his large sled, and here, with a good deal of pains and difficulty, he succeeded in getting his new skates and Sallie's snugly strapped on. The little girl was at first utterly helpless in hers. The most she could do was to stand absolutely still, for she was certain that a movement to the right or to the left would lay her prostrate on the snow.

But little Sallie had plenty of energy and persistency, or what Donald called “ pluck,” and although this learning to skate proved a much more formidable matter than she had anticipated, she resolved not to give the matter up.

Donald encouraged her, too. She held one of his hands, and he put the other arm tight around her waist, and so they started off on the pond.

Donald was a capital skater, and though his cousin could not have stood alone for a moment on the ice, still he managed to support her steadily, and it seemed to the little girl that they were flying on wings over the smooth bright floor of the winter.

It was such a new, delicious sensation. She lost all her fearfulness in a few moments, and was half wild with delight. The small buds in her cheek bloomed out suddenly into full blush roses, her laugh wound itself like a silver thread into that of Donald's, and the distant hills, in their swaddling bands of snow, caught the sound in their echoes and sent it back again.

And here the children skated for an hour back and forth on the pond beyond the orchard, and at last Sallie grew tired, and Donald found a large

decayed log, which lay close to the pond, where his cousin sat and rested.

"It's cold, Donald," said the little girl, looking at her cousin with a slight shiver, as the warmth which the rapid exercise had kindled through her blood began to die away, after she had sat still for a few minutes.

"Is it? Well, I know a capital way to warm you, Sallie; I've seen the boys kindle a bonfire a great many times on the river, and I'll make one here, out of the dead branches. It will take but a few minutes, and it's such capital fun to see the flames make a blazing pyramid on the ice!"

"Oh, I should think it would be!" And the blue eyes of Sallie St. Clair danced with delight.

It took Donald but a few minutes to gather a pile of dried branches, and a boy was never yet at a loss for ways and means to kindle a fire. He found a couple of matches in his pocket, and striking a light, he touched the small jet of flame to some dried leaves. The flame soon clutched hold of the branches, and in a few moments the whole was in a blaze, and Donald carried his cousin to the burning pile, and Sallie looked on with amazement, and clapped her hands for glee at the strange spectacle. And several times Donald left her, for she could now stand by herself on the ice, while he went off in quest of more fuel to replenish the failing fire.

Now, although the day was cold, the nights had not been intensely so for a week previous, and the ice of the pond was not frozen very deep. The fire warmed and melted it in its vicinity, and while Donald was searching for the dead boughs, he suddenly heard a sharp cracking sound, then a wild cry leaped out from his cousin's lips, and the boy looked up to see the small cloaked and hooded figure sinking down in the great chasm which had suddenly opened under the feet of Sallie St. Clair.

The faces of the dead are not whiter than was the face of this boy, Donald Avon, as he rushed out on the pond, and towards the small arms which were reached up in wild supplication to him as they went under.

Donald had taken some lessons in swimming the previous summer, though he was not expert in this art yet; but he did not think of himself *then*; his only thought was of the sweet face of his cousin, struggling and strangling under the cold waters. The ice cracked under him as he approached the spot where it had broken, and he was about to plunge in, when the dripping, drowned hair, suddenly rose to the surface.

The boy clutched hold of it, he dragged it out; the ice was cracking, cracking, but he threw the drenched figure swiftly yet carefully out farther on the pond, where the ice was stronger, and managed to skim over it. One moment more, and he would have gone under himself.

Another minute, and he had taken the dripping, unconscious figure in his arms, and fast as his trembling feet and the heavy burden would permit, he bore it towards the house.

What a sight it was for the eyes of Donald's mother, as they fell on the dripping figure of her little niece—on the white face of her son. Donald's first cry was—

"I don't believe she's dead, mother; though she fell in, she wasn't under long enough."

Dear children, who read my story, can you think how glad I am to tell you that these words of Donald's were true? They poured restoratives down the throat of little Sallie St. Clair, they chafed and warmed her cold limbs, and in a little while, they had the great joy of seeing her open her blue eyes again. And it seemed very wonderful that in a few days she grew quite well again. So, while fever and diphtheria gathered last winter so many children into the great garner of God, and left so many homes desolate and mourning where they had bloomed in beauty and fragrance, little Sallie St. Clair lived on to rejoice the eyes and keep warm the hearts of her parents; and while the children's graves, like small pillows, were scattered over the land for the spring grass to cover, she who had come so very near to death lived very happy on earth—not so happy though as the dear little children who went home to their Father and ours in Heaven.

But the pond had lost its old charm—its old sweet associations for Sallie St. Clair, and all through the winter she never went with her cousin Donald skating "Out on the Pond" any more. She put her skates carefully away, but once in a while now she goes and looks at them wistfully and says—

"Another winter, if I live, I shall be older and wiser. Perhaps I will try it once more; but oh, I will never go near a fire on the ice again."

Agnes Bell.

IN TWO PARTS.

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

PART I.

"Oh dear!" said the lady of whom I write—
Agnes Bell, and she put down the book she
had been reading, with a sigh.

There was no bitterness, no anguish, no pain
in her voice—its dominant note was one of
weariness and dissatisfaction, which touched
on disgust, and yet was scarcely intensified
into that quality.

"What is the matter, Agnes, my child?"
asked another voice from an opposite corner
of the large and luxurious sitting-room. This
voice was in striking contrast with the other.
It was a singularly pleasant one, but it had a
maturity about it which years alone had not con-
ferred upon it, but which was the result of
large feeling and suffering—suffering which
had not crushed or blighted, but strengthened
and sweetened it; a brave, steady, hopeful
voice still.

"Aunt Ellen," continued the first speaker,
with more of energy, and something more of
disgust in her tones, "I'm just sick of living
this sort of life that I do; and sick of every-
thing around me. It seems to me as though
all that was grand and heroic in past ages had
died out of the world; as if all its romance
and chivalry which once gave their warmth,
and coloring, and poetry to life have passed
away, and nothing is left us but a dead level
of living and feeling. I want to get up on
some high moral of feeling and being; but
there are none. I live a miserable, aimless
life of pleasure-seeking and taking; so does
everybody around me—and I'm sick of it!"

The young lady had risen now and was
pacing the room, while she talked, with rapid
steps. She had a fair, oval face, with very
dark hair, and eyes of the deepest azure.
The mouth was full of sweetness, as the eyes
were of intelligence.

Mrs. Lynn, the sister of the father of
Agnes Bell, looked up at her niece with some-
thing of pity, and something of pain in the
look, and she shook her head.

"Agnes, did you ever think that the fault
might lie in yourself, and in your own blind
vision that finds nothing beautiful nor heroic
in your life now?"

"No;" a little indignant, and very positive,
"it isn't *there*. I wonder, Aunt Ellen, if there
are any brave men, any loyal women such as

we read of in the old days, full of strength and tenderness. I can understand the exaltation of sacrifice—the power that comes with endurance, but our day and our times don't furnish material for any of these things. I must content myself with the opera and parties in the winter, and the Springs and my dresses in the summer; but after all, Aunt Ellen, there's something in me that sometimes makes up and utters its solemn, scornful protest at this way of living—at this waste of life. There is a higher soul, there are nobler elements within me that want light and nourishment; but where is the outward force to come from that shall compel me out of this stagnation of all that is best and highest in me?"

The girl stood still before her aunt now. The light had risen up and filled her face. There were tears in her azure eyes.

Mrs. Lynn was a woman of sound sense and fine intuitions.

"Dear child," she said, and the prevailing note of her voice was now one of tender sympathy—"don't lay the burden on your day and generation. It doesn't belong there. This 'dead level age,' as you call it, affords just as much opportunity and stimulus for brave and generous deeds, for true heroic living and self-sacrifice, as do those you call the days of chivalry. There are hearts all about you that need help, and strength, and comfort—there are kind words to be spoken, and duties to be done to others—there is the same improvement for our own characters to be wrought out—the same triumph over our own selfishness and evil to be achieved, with the help of God, and the same wonderful Father in Heaven to love and obey, that there has been in all seasons and times—in all ages and generations."

The sweet, solemn voice impressed Agnes Bell. She looked at her aunt with a bewildered look, in which doubt and belief struggled for mastery.

"But for me, Aunt Ellen—there is nothing for me to do as I can see, but to go on as I have done."

"The will finds a way, Agnes; let yours——"

Mrs. Lynn regretted that at this moment some fashionable friends of her niece's should have interrupted the interview. It rejoiced her heart to find that the better instincts of her niece rebelled against her life of fashion, of luxury and indolence. She realized all the sweet possibilities of the girl's warm and generous nature, warped as it had been by the society in which she moved, and the moral atmosphere about her. And her heart uttered

a voiceless petition that God would not suffer these generous aspirations—these intuitions for deeper and truer life, to be wasted—to languish and perish amid indolence, selfishness, and worldliness, from which it would be no light thing for this girl to disenfranchise herself, in a way that she looked not for, did God answer the prayer of Ellen, the aunt of Agnes Bell.

You must have discovered already that there was a great deal of inherent nobleness in the quality of this girl, although it was not every day or every week that her better self awakened and protested so earnestly against the course of a life that had no aim nor purpose—no duty to ennoble it. It was not every day that Agnes Bell felt her soul stir itself, and utter such solemn truths as it had this one, although I think she carried everywhere a sense of need and desolation, and of some wrong done to the finest and truest part of her nature.

She was motherless—had been from her early childhood. Her father was the senior partner in a large mercantile house in New York; Agnes was his only daughter. He loved her after the fashion of a man thoroughly absorbed in his business. He certainly was proud of her, and he had indulged her every want and whim from infancy. Her life had blossomed in the midst of wealth and luxury, but they had not quite spoiled her.

Mrs. Lynn had, as I hinted, a life "acquainted with sorrows"—such sorrow as bows many a woman or breaks her heart; but not this one. She had kept her faith and her love, and now the shadows had slipped away from her life long before it was evening, and left her with that fine sympathy for all sorrow which only experience can give.

In a way that she looked not for, I said, was the prayer of Mrs. Lynn for her niece answered. Two days later, came tidings that shook the heart of the nation—a mighty tocsin, which thrilled through the whole land, and men woke up at once from sloth, and money-getting, from all narrow and selfish aims and ends, into doers and heroes, and proved that the spirit of the fathers was alive in the hearts of the children—that American soul which had made to itself idols of silver and gold, had inherent manhood enough to break away from them all, and to make all the traditions and poems of ancient valor, and sacrifice, and patriotism to the death, living facts of the present.

The old baptism of the fathers descended upon the children once more with the first summons to defend the menaced capital of the nation. There were souls to answer with stout

arms on their sword hilts and brave hearts in their bosoms—"Here I am, strength, honor, life for my country!"

It was less than a week after Agnes's conversation with her aunt had transpired, that her brother entered the sitting-room somewhat hastily, a little before their late dinner hour.

Agnes looked up in mute inquiry, for everybody's face looked solemn, expectant, anxious, in that fearful crisis which had fallen on the nation.

Edward Bell bore a strong family resemblance to his sister, whose senior he was by three years. He had a slender, well-knit, flexible figure; his hair corresponded in color to hers, and his eyes were gray. There was an unmistakable air of good-breeding about him, and his classmates at college and his comrades in New York pronounced him a "fine, lovable fellow, with plenty of talent, that was likely to run to waste, for want of some force or necessity to develop it."

"Has anything new happened," asked Agnes, feeling that her brother had something on his mind, and the newspaper slipped from her lap to the floor. Everybody read the newspapers then.

"No, nothing especial," and he came towards her, and flung himself down on the lounge by her side—"we can't trust the telegrams now."

"What dreadful times we've fallen on," exclaimed Agnes, in a tone which showed plainly she *felt* her words.

"That's a fact; and Agnes, it's time for every man who loves his country and isn't a coward to be up and doing."

There was something in the words or the tones that made Agnes turn and look in her brother's face. The voice was not his usual one of careless indifference or good nature.

"I know it is," said the girl, with a little shudder foreshadowing some pain or fear—"but, after all, Ned, what is to be done?"

The young man leaned forwards, and stroked the tendrils of dark hair with a new tenderness, very unlike his usual free, lazy, brotherly way with his sister. It seemed as though some circumstance or crisis had stimulated the latent affection in him.

"Pretty little sister, you wouldn't feel very bad, would you, to have me go and fight for my country, when the time of her need and peril came?"

The answer came very quick and decided, as one's voice is apt to be when the heart is hurt suddenly by a pain that is not physical.

"Yes, I should feel very bad indeed. I

can't let you go, Ned, darling brother;" and she put her arm on his shoulder with a quick, fond gesture.

Edward Bell had little time to spare; what he said must be said quickly; though when he looked in the sweet face at his side, it cost him a sharp pang to make up his mind to the speech. It was a kind of failure when it came.

"Well, Agnes, you must make up your mind to be a soldier's sister, and behave as brave as one should who has that honor."

"What do you mean, Edward?" The small roses had vanished from the oval cheeks. She half forestalled the answer.

"I mean that the Seventh Regiment starts to-morrow for the Capital; I must not be behind the others in courage or duty."

"Oh, Edward!" A sob surged into and cut off the words here."

"Now don't, pet," said the young man, in those half caressing, half pleading tones, in which a mother soothes a tired, fretted child—"you'd be ashamed to own me for a brother of yours if I was a coward in this emergency, or proved myself unworthy of my country. I never knew until the last week that I loved her, and I want you to be a brave little patriot, and give me 'God speed,' and smiles instead of sobs, when I'm starting out on the way of honor and patriotism. Just think, too, what a scamp you'll get rid of when I'm off, and you won't have anybody to tease and fret the life out of you any more."

She did not heed this last part. She drew closer to him, and clasped her little dimpled hands, like a pair of half-blossomed water lilies, on his shoulder.

"But oh, Ned," she shuddered—"what if any harm should come to you, and you should be wounded or killed—it will kill me to think of it."

"Then be sensible enough not to do it, and not go to crowding your little brain with all sorts of horrible forebodings. Come, Agnes," changing the light tone into a serious one—"I want to see how brave and true a woman you can be, in this time that is trying all our souls. I want to find in you some of that heroism and self-sacrifice which the best and noblest women have shown in all ages, and the thought of which has strengthened the hearts of men in the day of battle.

"The time of trial has come to you, Agnes—you will not be found wanting!"

Could this be her luxurious, fastidious brother, who was talking to her now of

endurance and sacrifice for duty's sake? The words struck chords that vibrated deep in the soul of Agnes Bell. There flashed across her, her old longings for some noble purpose or duty, lifting her life into a fine exaltation and heroism. The time had come. She swallowed back her tears—

"Oh, Ned, darling," and she put her soft arms about his neck, "you shall not be disappointed in me; I will not be unworthy of what I am—the sister of a soldier."

Edward Bell kissed the sweet lips that spoke these brave words as he had never kissed them before, and then, for time was short, he went on to talk of the necessary preparations for his sudden departure, sure that nothing would be so well for his sister at this trying time as to engage her thoughts and exertions in some practical employment. It is true that Edward Bell did not at this time require an extensive wardrobe, but a man never yet set out on any journey, either of pleasure, business, or war, without requiring a few last stitches, and Edward Bell took care to make the most of these; besides, there were various last messages to deliver and letters to be written, all which offices he deputized his sister.

And when he left her, the smile on her face, though it might be sad, was brave and ready.

The sitting-room door had only closed after the young man, when he opened it again—

"Oh, sis, I forgot to tell you that Guy Wooster goes off with the Seventh: if he finds time, he'll be in to say good-bye to you."

The door closed again, and Agnes's thoughts had a new interest and solicitude. Guy Wooster had been her brother's classmate and his intimate friend since the two had graduated. Of course he and Agnes had been frequently drawn together. Edward was loud and energetic in his friend's praises; he was a fine scholar, an accomplished gentleman, a great favorite with ladies, as he was with his own sex too.

Agnes had, or might have had, many admirers—this friend of her brother's would have been her lover. "But he was of the same type," the girl mused; no grand or heroic elements in his character, nothing to excite her admiration, or compel her worship; a man after his time, refined, intelligent, going to suppers and the opera, with the prospect of a fortune, and no ennobling purpose in life. Agnes liked to talk with him—he was intelligent, interesting, and she was thrown into the society of too many men who were

stupid, conceited, shallow, not to appreciate the vivacity and good sense of her brother's friend. But something more and better than these her heart and mind demanded in a husband. He must have somewhat to command her admiration, her reverence; some great reserved moral force in him which would inspire and exalt her.

So reasoned Agnes Bell, and when Guy Wooster pressed his suit for the hand of the sister of his friend, in those tender and gracious words which are most likely to win the heart of a woman, he was refused, but in such grave and gentle fashion that his pride could hardly be wounded, and he left the presence of Agnes Bell that night with a deeper love, and a profounder respect for her character, than he had ever felt before.

This had transpired in the winter, three months before. The young man had continued to visit Edward as before, so Agnes and he were still thrown together, and were on the most friendly terms; although there was now a little shade of embarrassment or reserve on both sides.

But now this was all changed. Guy Wooster was going to the war—giving, like her brother, all that he had, his honor, his hopes and dreams of the future—all that made his young manhood full of strength and promise, to his country. Here was something of moral heroism to touch the heart and inspire the reverence of the woman! And who could tell whether he should ever come back? The tears arose and rolled slow down the cheeks of Agnes Bell as she sat sewing for her brother, with the soft April sunshine spilling through the windows of the sitting-room, and wrapping her in its garment of gold—the sunshine that away off on fair country hill-sides, and in the low meadows, was calling to the young grass and the early flowers, and brimming the April days with the new golden wine of the year.

So Agnes Bell sat weeping over her work; and sometimes she stopped to wonder whether Guy Wooster would find time to drop in and say "good-bye" to her. She hoped he would; she should love to clasp his hand now and give him her "God speed," and let him see how she honored him, as a true woman always does a brave man for the sacrifice he makes of himself and his life to his country. And as she sewed diligently the tears went—large, slow tears—down the cheeks of Agnes Bell.

There was a knock at the door, and then it opened, and there stood Guy Wooster. He

was so frequent a guest at the house, that the domestic ushered him in quite informally.

"I couldn't go off, Agnes, without taking time to say 'good-bye' to you," said the young man, advancing in his easy, graceful fashion, and giving his young hostess his hand.

"I shouldn't have forgiven you if you had." She tried to smile, but her eyes were heavy, and her cheeks stained with the tears she had had no time to brush aside.

The sight moved the young lover deeply.

"What is the matter with you, Agnes?" he asked, and his face asked much more as he still held the small hand.

There was a little sob half quenched by a great effort.

"It is for Edward's sake. It is only a couple of hours since that he told me—" she could not get beyond this.

"Edward is a happy fellow to have a sister to weep for his going, Agnes," answered Guy Wooster, with something of pain in his voice which smote her heart. Then he tried to comfort her, a little clumsily after the fashion of a man. "You must keep up a brave heart, Agnes. I hope he'll come home safe in health and sound in limb. It hardly becomes me to trumpet the praises of the regiment to which I belong, but oh! they're as brave a set of fellows as ever shouldered muskets, and set off in the hour of peril to do good service for the honor of their country. It seems to have transformed every one of them into heroes, and the old days of chivalry and self-immolation seem to have blossomed suddenly in the heart of this nineteenth century—this living one, better, I believe, than all those that lie sleeping beneath it."

Agnes Bell looked up in amazement on hearing these words; and then she felt how a strong purpose, how consecration of one's whole being to some noble work or end, enlarges and exalts a man. There was a new power in the fine manly face; the latent courage and nobleness of the man's nature had been aroused by having a great good object to live or to die for! And looking at Guy Wooster in this new light, the heart of Agnes Bell thrilled to him as it had never done before.

Did some fine subtle magnetism acquaint him with this? He looked in her face, and asked—

"Well, Agnes, I have neither mother nor sister, as you know, to give me a tear or a 'God speed;' and I thought that I should love to have this latter from your lips—that I should carry it with me as some precious treasure,

and that it might make my arm stronger and my heart braver in the day of battle, and it may be the last thing that I shall ever ask of you, Agnes. You wouldn't deny so much to any friend. Won't you give so much to me, Agnes?"

She tried to answer him, but her voice turned traitor here; and instead of words there was a sob, and then tears. The young man looked down on the bright bowed head with yearning tenderness. Something emboldened him to draw his arm around the girl's waist.

"Agnes," he whispered, "are all those tears for Edward?"

It was not a time for girlish coyness and pretty hide-and-go-seek answers, which in more leisurely mood and softer times are so befitting the winner towards the wooed.

"Not all," sobbed Agnes, sobbing harder afterwards.

"And what are not for him are for me?"

Silence this time made affirmation. And then, thrilled with rapture, which all the stern necessities of the days to come had no power to weaken, Guy Wooster drew to his heart the woman who, for more than a year, he had vainly sought to win. There followed for both, an hour of happiness which all the deadly peril of the coming ones did not enter into and blight, as that awful cloud hanging close over the land with its thunderings and lightnings had not power to shrivel the banners of sun and shine—could not hush the voice of the spring birds singing in the trees and the hollows. Then Guy Wooster rose up. By right and duty of his manhood he must hold a brave and steady front to the woman whose woof of life had just been woven into his.

"It is hard to tear myself away from you, I would not do it for any sake but duty's, oh my Agnes!"

She clung to him shivering and weeping for a space. Then she put aside her woman's tears and her weakness, and looked up in his face and smiled a smile which it must have done any man's heart good to see—so tender was it, so sweet and brave a smile which was touched through and through with sorrow, but not the selfish sorrow that yields and murmurs.

"Go, Guy, and the Lord God go with you."

And he answered—

"In life or in death I shall be with you, Agnes."

"This is not the last time—you will let me see you again, Guy?" her voice full of the earnestness and the dread of denial.

"Just five minutes before I leave. That is all I can give you," and so they parted.

Minnie, my Sister.

BY GRACE LEE.

She had blue eyes, red cheeks, and curling hair; wore a blue, embroidered dress, white apron and little blue gaiters. A gipsy hat rested lightly upon her brown curls, and she was accompanied by a small white dog with a pink ribbon around its neck. Had a habit of singing low and sweetly to herself, and was beloved by all.

Has any one seen my little sister? It is a long time since she went away; now I have a noble husband, a fine house and much company; but to-night I wish I were a girl again, and had my little sister to watch over. I wish I could be called from my writing desk to find some muslin for dolly a dress; to look for a lost story book; to take up dropped stitches in dolly's stocking; or to find some stray play-things—yet these things used to fret me once.

My guests say, "How quiet it is here; what a nice time you have for reading." But my ears are aching for noise; to hear a sweet childish voice and the pattering of little feet; to hear the continued drumming on the piano just for fun, or the ringing laughter of youthful voices in an adjoining parlor when I had company; but these things made me nervous once.

They say, "What an orderly, put-away-look everything wears." But my eyes are longing for confusion. I want to find my work-basket turned into a prison for some recreant dolly, and my thimble, spools, and scissors claiming no relationship to each other; to find my choice books taken to build houses with, and left lying upon the carpet; to find my drawing-book in the front entry, and my portfolio in the kitchen; to find my magazines taken for picture books and bearing the stains of fruit and candy; to have my flowers broken down in playing ball with kitty; to look in vain for a new book, and hear a sweet voice say, "I took it into my play-house, sister, to make a foot-stool;" yet these things made me angry once.

My friends say, "How free you are; always at liberty for concerts and lectures, picnics and balls." But I do not want to be so free. I want to brush my little sister's curls on a summer morning, and listen for school bell, and watch little feet bounding away to school. I want to remain at home from a concert to finish a little dress to be worn on some extra occasion to-morrow. I want to be teased to

sing when I come home from school, cold and tired; I want to be kept from a party to watch by a little one when "sister can take care of me better." I want to sit by a crib in the deepening twilight and tell oft-repeated stories, and watch the eyelids droop over the blue eyes and listen to the calm, low breathing of childhood. Yet these things I called irksome duties once.

They do not know their happiness then, these older sisters; they do not know that in after years, when life no longer wears "The coloring of romance it wore," memory will fling open wide the portals of the mind and wander back to those sunny days, when "Life was all sweet poesy, and weariness a dream," as the happiest season of our life on earth. They do not know the happiness contained in performing those simple acts—I did not.

A womanly figure, tall and graceful stands before me now. The brown hair is brushed back from the broad, low forehead, and wound in a heavy coil at the back. The eyes are blue as the summer skies and beaming with intelligence. The dress is faultlessly arranged, and the arm which peeps from the half opened sleeve is white and beautifully shaped. She has just returned from a young ladies' seminary, and brings drawings and paintings for the walls of my sitting-room, and fancy work for my centre-table.

Can this be the little sister who used to sit in my lap and plead for the story of Poor Cock Robin? I can hardly think she is the same one, but she steadily declares she is, and says it shall be proven. She brings a little trunk, and taking out a small red regalia, with blue flowers, asks if I did not make it when she joined the children's Temperance Band. I say I did. She shows me a pink hood with white spots, and says I knit it for her the first winter she went to school. She hands me a blue merino shawl with a large three-cornered rent, and says she did it when cousin Will drew her home from school in his new sleigh; cousin Will, the brave sailor boy, who is sleeping down among the sea-weed and coral.

A servant enters with a card for her; she passes it to me while the blushes come and go in her cheeks, and I read the name of Prof. Kingsley. I see it very plainly now; my little sister is lost and my big one soon will be.

It is growing dark and I must have lights; I am glad she is happy, but how much I wish she were "my little sister," lying before me in her crib, and I sitting beside her pushing the curls from off her forehead and listening to her

evening prayer. If I only had her back again, how patient and gentle I would be. How much I would exert myself to gratify every wish. I cannot have her, but many there are who have not yet lost their little sisters. I wonder if they know what little sunshine treasures they are. By and by childhood will merge into womanhood, and then they will sigh in vain to hear the pattering of little feet, or the sweet name "sister" uttered by a childish voice.

Deal gently with them, for by and by, when this mask of mortality is thrown aside, we will see that the white wings of the angels hover over innocent childhood.

FEBRUARY 7th, 1863.

Our New Sewing Machine.

BY D. L. T.

You have all heard of Uncle John, I suppose, for everybody knew him, and if he were really *uncle* to half the youngsters that called him *uncle*, he must have had a numerous progeny of nephews and nieces. Be that as it may, he was called Uncle John by everybody, and with all, was one of the most genial, kind-hearted and loving old uncles that ever was.

Many years ago he had removed from old Virginia to the Great West, and at the time of which we write was residing near his relatives, who had all long previously preceded him to the West, in one of the most romantic and fertile counties of the thriving State of Ohio.

Whether he was descended from the "F. F. V.'s" or not I do not know, but presume he was not, as himself and all his ancestors in Virginia were of the Quaker profession, or, as I should have said, *persuasion*: and as it was against their "principles" to hold slaves, it is probable he would not be recognized by the Virginia chivalry as descended from "the first families." Suffice it, however, to say, that he was blessed with abundant means, and though surrounded by numerous relatives in Ohio he preferred living on his own farm, and spent his time in its general superintendence and in such active social duties as he felt devolved upon him to execute.

We have said Uncle John was of the "Quaker persuasion," but by this we by no means intend to indicate that he was a very reserved, set-bound, or solemn-faced Christian. When a young man, as we have been told, he was at the head of all the fun-going parties in the Quaker neighborhood, and constitutionally was as full of jokes and fun as a young colt is of frolic. Often have we listened to his narratives of tricks played off on all sorts of people; and to the day of his death it was impossible for him to forego a prank or joke at anybody's expense, whenever the opportunity occurred.

Uncle John had never married. Whether he had been jilted in his young days by some pretty Quakeress, or whether it was his love of fun had deprived him of the possibility of assuming a serious habit long enough "to pop" so serious a question, I do not know, but when he broke up his establishment in Virginia to remove out West, I know that he provided amply for his old housekeeper, who had presided over his establishment ever since his parents' death. As her relatives all lived in Virginia she declined removing with him to

Ohio, as indeed at that time it was not expected he would live otherwise than with some of his relatives, already settled in the vicinity of his new purchases.

But he early discovered this would not be to him a pleasant mode of living, and he soon took up his residence on one of his own farms. Soon thereafter he learned of the death of a widowed sister, whose family had settled in the new State of Illinois. This sister had left to his care an only son—a little fellow of ten years of age, and Uncle John started immediately for this new devise to his family and his care. Having settled up as far as necessary the business of his sister's estate, with Willie he returned to his home in Ohio.

His new western housekeeper not being in his estimation the most judicious person to manage the education of his "ward," he soon thereafter placed him in a "Friends' boarding school," where he continued to reside until his eighteenth year, with occasional intervals of weeks, and sometimes months, spent in visits to his uncle's establishment. At eighteen he was sent to a flourishing college in the West to complete his scholastic education.

It was near the close of the winter of 185—, Uncle John received an unusually singular letter from his nephew, who was expected to graduate at the close of the "present session," inviting Uncle John by all means to attend the commencement exercises, which would take place in a few weeks; but the odd part of the letter was that he wished to consult his uncle respecting his future plans and prospects, and added, that he had procured a splendid *sewing machine*, which he designed presenting to Uncle John's establishment; and if it was thought best upon consultation for him to proceed without intermission to his professional studies, he would send home the *machine* by Uncle John when he came to the commencement.

"What in the name of common sense," said Uncle John, after perusing the letter, "can Will want with a sewing machine? or what in the world does he suppose we can need such a new-fangled invention in my house; besides he hasn't yet got rid, it seems, of his hankering after the law. I would almost as soon consent to send him to a divinity college, as preachers, in my opinion, made after the fashion of scholastic rules, are about as useless as lawyers. Haven't I enough for us all, to say nothing about his own estate, which by this time must be no inconsiderable matter; and what's the use in the fellow's studying law or

trafficking in sewing machines? I verily believe too much learning has made the fellow mad, and the sooner I get him home and on the farm, engaged in active, wholesome, useful business, the better. This all comes of sending him to college, but I'll fix him. I'll get that law out of his head before six months, or my name is not Uncle John."

Thus reasoned Uncle John after perusing Will's last letter, and on the appointed day he repaired by railroad and stage to the beautiful town of O——, to witness the commencement exercises of its celebrated university.

Stopping at the principal hotel, Uncle John dispatched a note to his nephew, informing him of his arrival, and requesting a business interview at his earliest leisure. Will repaired at once to his uncle, and was fondly greeted by his loving relative.

It was finally agreed between them that for the present the law should be given up, and Will was to return home and take charge of the farming establishment of his uncle for twelve months, and if, after that he was still determined to study a profession, Uncle John was to make no further opposition.

This question settled, the exercises over, bills all paid, and they were to return at once to the farm, which would be in three or four days after Uncle John's arrival.

At the close of the exercises, Will insisted on Uncle John's spending the last evening with him at his boarding house, when he promised to show his uncle his new sewing machine.

"By the way, Will, what in the name of thunder," a favorite expression of Uncle John's, "do we want with this new-fangled machine?"

"Oh, it is a perfect beauty," replied Will, "and will be wonderfully useful and convenient. Everybody about here that is able to afford it has one, and I thought it would be so handy, I could not resist the inclination to get one for us; besides it makes no noise, or if any, a very musical one, and indeed I would not be without it for the world, and you'll say so too, if I am not mistaken, when you see for yourself its wonderful properties."

In due time Uncle John was escorted by his nephew to a beautiful cottage in the outskirts of the village where, Will informed him he had been boarding for the past three months.

"I got disgusted," said Will, "at the fare at our old boarding house, and commenced keeping bachelor's hall at the beginning of the session, but I soon got tired of that dry mode of living and sought my present boarding house, which is kept by a very nice lady, and is a

thousand times more pleasant than the crowded old establishment you placed me in three years ago."

At supper Uncle John and his nephew sat down to a plain but tastily arranged table, set out for only three, and which was presided over by a beautiful and interesting lady in the prime of life, and whom Will had introduced as his landlady, Mrs. Anna. Their conversation was of a general character, enlivened by the jokes and odd sayings of Uncle John, who was wonderfully taken, for an old Quaker, with the quiet dignity and grace of Will's landlady, thanking her for her kind regards for his young relative, and commending him for his tact and judgment in securing so pleasant, quiet and eligible a home.

After tea was removed, Will and his uncle were seated in the parlor, talking over the progress of matters and things at the old homestead, when uncle John broached the subject of the sewing machine. Will retired for a moment, and shortly returned with word that his landlady would be in directly and exhibit its wonderful perfection and powers. Soon thereafter the lady entered and took a seat by the fire, but Uncle John somehow was confident it was not the lady of the supper table. "She must be a daughter just returned from a visit. This one cannot be over sixteen or eighteen years at farthest, and her mother must be thirty-five or forty at the least. But has Will forgot all his politeness not to introduce us. This all comes of sending him to college. I was afraid it would spoil him, or perhaps he thinks it not worth while to be so formal with an old codger like me. This fellow boarder, then, was the loadstone doubtless that weaned him from his bachelor trials. I don't wonder the rascal suddenly conceived keeping bachelor's hall a dry business, compared to such a quiet, nice little snuggerly as this, with so nice a companion for a boarder. I don't wonder at the change—faith I'd done it myself. Will's not such a simpleton as he might be."

These reflections, and many more like them, rapidly passing through Uncle John's mind as he slyly glanced at the lady, quietly sewing before him, were suddenly interrupted by Will's saying—

"My dear Anna, will you show Uncle John his new sewing machine. He is anxious to witness its wonderful performance, having merely heard of them, as none, he informs me, have yet got round to the parts where he resides."

Uncle John stared at Anna, the young lady addressed, arose and approaching his side, naïvely said—

"Will has been telling you, I presume, about his new sewing machine—'(It must be the daughter, thought Uncle John—the voice is precisely her mother's)'. It was none of my doings, Uncle John," resumed Anna. "You see Will was in his last session in college, and I was to graduate in the female department at the same time. So he persuaded me it would be much nicer to keep house together the remainder of the season, than to be boarding round at public houses—and with a good sewing machine which you know, Uncle John, is a very economical piece of furniture, it would cost no more to keep house than to board. So Will rented this little rookery and brought me here, and calls me his little sewing machine; and now we are ready to go home with you, Uncle John, if you think there is any room for such an odd article of furniture in the old house as a loving little niece to a good old uncle." Saying which, she gracefully bent her head and imprinted a loving kiss on Uncle John's cheek, and as his eyes were fast filling with moisture, she burst out in a ringing laugh, saying—

"This is so funny—but Will planned it all, Uncle John, to retaliate for what he says was an unmerciful joke you once played upon him."

Uncle John's eyes, during this unexpected and funny speech, had been opening wider and wider. The whole thing had burst upon him without the least preconception, until the warm kiss on his overflowing cheek aroused him to himself, and brushing away a tear, he burst out with—

"You confounded young scamp! I'll be even with you yet, before you're six months older; but in consideration of this beautiful, and musical, and economical, and useful, and convenient piece of household furniture, I will forgive you this time; and if it proves, as I am half inclined to think it will, as useful and agreeable as my present impressions induce me to believe, if there is not room in the old house we will build a new one; and as you think, you young scapegrace! you 'could not possibly do without it for the world,' why, we'll take it with us to-morrow, and may happiness and the blessings of your old uncle ever attend you both as long as you both shall live. But, by the way, Will, what has become of your mother-in-law, who presided at the supper table?"

"Oh uncle," said Anna, "I just covered up

these curls in a staid old lady's cap, and hid some of the roses on my cheeks with a little extra powder. Didn't I make a fine looking old lady?"

"Indeed you did," said Uncle John. "I had almost fallen in love with your mother myself; but never mind, Will's married both mother and daughter, so we'll have them both at home any how, and that perhaps is just as well."

Uncle John was as good as his word. A new and splendid villa occupies the site of the old homestead. Will has long since forgotten all about the law, and Uncle John often says the new sewing machine is the life and light of his happy household.

Every pleasant day, when I knew him last, Uncle John might be seen promenading the orchards, climbing over the hills, or clambering among the cliffs bordering the romantic stream that skirts his lands, and always accompanied by a little Will, or still younger Anna, his ever present and almost inseparable companions.

FORT WAYNE, IND.

Out in the World.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER XI.

"I saw your old friend Madeline on the street to-day." The speaker raised his eyes from a book. He was a serious looking man, with hard lips, and gloomy, discontented eyes. The tone in which this remark was uttered, expressed no kind feelings. It was plain, that the "old friend" did not stand high in his regard.

"Ah?" responded his wife, who sat sewing. The husband had been reading to himself, and the wife, while sewing, thinking to herself. There was no light on his face as he spoke, and no light on hers, as she uttered her simple "Ah."

"Yes," said the husband, "and she looked like a crazy woman." There was a covert pleasure in his voice.

"Crazy, Mr. Lawrence!" The large dark eyes, gentle and tender, yet slightly veiled by pensive shadows, lifted themselves quickly.

"Crazy, or something else. She was driving along like a frightened bird."

"Alone?" said Mrs. Lawrence.

"Yes. All alone. I looked straight into her face, but she didn't notice me. In fact, I don't think she saw anything. There's trouble in her wigwam, I imagine. Why not? Jealousy on the one hand and free love on the other are by no means favorable to domestic peace."

"Indeed, Mr. Lawrence, you are unjust to Madeline!" said the wife, in earnest deprecation. "She may be gay and thoughtless—fond of admiration and society—but I will stake my life on her purity."

Mr. Lawrence shrugged his shoulders, and looked his doubts.

"How did she appear?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, returning to the fact mentioned by her husband.

"Flurried, for one thing. Pale as a ghost for another. Half frightened into the bargain. There's something wrong, I can tell you, Jessie."

"What time was it?"

"A little before dark. I was near the South Ferry, and she had, to all appearance, just come over from Brooklyn. The thought struck me that she might have called here."

"O no. She wasn't here," said Mrs. Lawrence. "And you say she was pale and agitated?"

"Frightened is the true word," answered Mr. Lawrence.

"What can it mean?" Mrs. Lawrence spoke in a troubled voice.

"Simply, that she's reached the end of her tether, and been brought up with a shock. Such things are sure to occur sooner or later. To say the least, Madeline has been forward and imprudent. The public don't soon forget a circumstance like the one that happened with her a year or two ago—how she flirted with a man-about-town, whose character was patent to every body, to the disgust and indignation of her husband, who resented the outrage in a way that she did not soon forget."

"I never believed half of that story," said Mrs. Lawrence.

"You are less credulous than I am, Jessie. The fact is, to my thinking, the half was never told. There must be something very wrong between a man and his young wife, when he leaves her, in anger, at a large party, to make her way home after midnight as best she can."

"The hasty acts of a jealous husband should never be held as conclusive against his wife," answered Mrs. Lawrence. "Jealousy has

been blind and cruel from the beginning. I know Madeline better than all of you who are so ready to take up an evil report against her. She is a creature of impulse—strong-willed, and wrong-headed at times; but pure and true. It is not right to judge of all dispositions and temperaments by one rule. Minds are as different as faces. The very thing which in one would be an indecorum, in another might be as innocent as the deed of an artless child."

"I was never a believer in Madeline's artlessness," said Mr. Lawrence. "To me, she is a bundle of arts and coquetties. Nothing solid or truthful about her. And I'm not surprised at her being in trouble. How could it be otherwise?"

Mrs. Lawrence understood her husband well enough to know, that, from a spirit of opposition, if for no other reason, he would depreciate Mrs. Jansen as long as she continued the defence; so she kept back what it was still in her heart to say, and taking up the sewing from her lap, went on with her evening's work. Mr. Lawrence did not at the same time resume his book. The pleasure he had found in its pages was not strong enough to draw him quickly back from the pleasure of paining his wife by denouncing her friend—a recreation indulged in by a great many husbands—so, after a brief silence he went on, speaking with a virtuous indignation of manner, that did not deceive his wife. He had a pique against Madeline, and disliked her in consequence—the more, because Mrs. Lawrence would not turn against her.

"The fact is," said he, warming to his pleasant work, "Madeline has taken to bad company."

His wife dropped her needle hand with a start. A painful expression swept over her face.

"What is your authority for saying this?" she demanded, a low thrill of indignation in her tones.

"Common report," answered Mr. Lawrence, coolly.

"What do you mean by common report? I have heard nothing like this against her."

"Men who are about every day hear more than women who stay at home," said Mr. Lawrence. "There is a great deal of hard talk against Mrs. Jansen, and the people with whom she keeps company. They have a free love association at Mrs. Woodbine's; so the story goes."

"I don't like Mrs. Woodbine," said Mrs.

Lawrence, "and I've told Madeline, often, that she was neither a sincere friend, nor a safe adviser. But this talk about free love is all a lie."

Mr. Lawrence really enjoyed his wife's excitement. So he answered—

"Very far from being a lie, let me tell you, Jessie. I believe every word of the story. It's making a stir in the city. In last Sunday's Mercury, there was an article on the subject, so pointed that several individuals were recognized, and their names banded from lip to lip. 'A bright, dashing young beauty, whose husband would do well to look after her a little more closely'—so the article reads—evidently refers to your friend Madeline."

"Don't, don't say that!" replied Mrs. Lawrence, in painful astonishment. "A woman's reputation is too sacred a thing to be trifled with."

"And, therefore," said he, "a pure woman will not associate with the impure, lest an evil thing be said of her. We judge of people by the company they keep. Birds of a feather flock together. Similar things attract; dissimilar things repel. If Madeline were really the pure being you imagine her to be, she would keep company only with the pure; the fact that she does not, is evidence against her, and I accept it as conclusive. But, wrong ways always end in trouble to those who walk therein, and she is finding this out. She's had a flare up with her husband, probably. Some kind friend has informed him, no doubt, that his wife is the dashing young beauty referred to in the Mercury. People, you know, always have kind friends ready to tell them the latest bad news."

A servant opened the door, and said—

"There's a lady down stairs, ma'am."

"Who is it?" enquired Mrs. Lawrence.

"I think she said Mrs. Jankin, or Mrs. Janton. I asked her over again, but she spoke so low that I can't be certain."

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence turned, with a slight start, and looked at each other.

"Don't see her," said the husband, in an undertone.

"Mrs. Jansen, perhaps?" Mrs. Lawrence spoke to the servant.

"Yes, ma'am, I guess that was it," replied the girl.

"Say that I will be down in a moment"—

"Jessie!" Mr. Lawrence uttered his wife's name in authoritative remonstrance; but she did not recall her words. The servant went out. As she closed the door, Mr. Lawrence said, speaking resolutely—

"You must not see this woman!"

"Why not?" calmly asked his wife, who had already laid aside her work.

"I think reasons enough have been stated here to-night," replied Mr. Lawrence.

"Not satisfactory to my mind," was firmly answered. "You know that I am no summer friend—that when I have faith it is not easily shaken. My poor friend must be in sore trouble, or she would not come all the way from her home in New York to visit me at this late hour. Of course I shall see her. She can do me no harm, and I may do her much good."

And rising, she moved past her husband with a quiet firmness of manner that he made no effort to oppose, understanding, as he did, the strength of her will when she acted from love or duty.

"Why, Madeline! What has happened?" Mrs. Lawrence entered the parlor hurriedly, and stood face to face with her unhappy friend. A faint smile tried, for an instant, to form itself on Madeline's lips, but lost itself amid lines of suffering. An effort to speak followed, but only mute signs were visible. Her face was pale and pinched, like the face of one who had been sick.

"What has happened, dear?" Mrs. Lawrence repeated her question in a tenderer voice, as she held tightly her friend's hand. "Have you been sick?" A new thought came, in explanation of this untimely visit and the strange appearance of Madeline. She had been ill, and, wandering in mind, had risen and gone away from home without being observed. The thought thrilled her with a feeling of alarm.

"Have you been sick?" She asked the question again.

"I am sick—sick! O yes, I am sick, Jessie!" sobbed out Mrs. Jansen, her eyes flooding with tears; and she bent down her face and hid it on the bosom of her friend, who drew an arm tightly around her. She was trembling like a frightened child. As she stood, shrinking down against her, Mrs. Lawrence perceived the tremor of her body growing less, and at the same time noticed the weight increasing, so that she had to brace herself to its support.

"Madeline!" she said, anxiously. But there was no reply. "Madeline!" she repeated. Even while the name parted her lips, she was grasping her poor friend tightly to keep her from falling to the floor. Drawing her to a sofa, she laid her down, and as her

head fell back upon one of the cushions, Mrs. Lawrence saw that she had fainted.

CHAPTER XII.

"She has thought better of this," said Carl Jansen to himself, as he walked homeward at evening. But, he did not feel the confidence his words expressed. A dead weight was lying on his heart. Might not all this be a terrible dream? Oh, that he could awake! A desolate silence appeared to reign through the house as he entered. The air had a real or imaginary chilliness, that sent a shudder along his nerves.

No, she had not thought better of this! Carl did not yet clearly understand his wife's character. "I shall find her at home," he had said to himself, many times, during that troubled afternoon. But, he did not find her at home. All was as he had left it at dinner time. Not a chair had been moved in the sitting-room, not a book taken from its place in the library, not a curtain drawn in their chamber. Not the slightest change in the strict order of things since he went away. How dreary it was! He asked no questions of the servants, and they, reading pain and mystery in his face, did not venture to question. But, they understood that something was wrong between him and his wife.

At the tea table, fronting him, Jansen saw, in the space vacant to material vision, that fixed, stony image which had been present to him all day, and in all places—his wife as he had left her in the morning. Eating was only a pretence. After taking a cup of tea, he went up stairs. What next? Should he go out, or remain at home? As to answering his wife's letter, or in any way communicating with her, that was not in all his thoughts. Pride, and a spirit of dogged adherence to any accepted line of conduct, prevented this. He did not even remember the place at which she had said a letter would reach her. Suffer what he might in this contest, from one purpose Jansen did not waver for an instant. He would not pursue his fugitive wife—would offer no persuasions to return—would remain silent and passive. He had done nothing to provoke the step she had taken—so he talked with himself—and, therefore, he had no apologies or concessions to offer. In her communication, she had dictated terms—that was his reading of her letter—and he would listen to no dictation from a woman, even if she were his wife. To yield in anything, was to yield all. This was her desperate venture for the

supremacy; but she would find herself mistaken in his character—her venture would fail.

"If I say 'come back,'" Carl remembered this touching sentence in his wife's letter; but he did not feel its true meaning. "No," he spoke out sternly, "I will not say come back! I might as well yield everything; become an appendage to my wife, instead of her head and husband. No—no! I do not thus understand my duty. On the nature of things, on legality, on religion, I set my feet, and there I will stand. If Madeline ignores all these, and makes a desperate effort to drive me into ignoring them, she will find, to her cost, that I am not a willow wand that she can bend as she pleases, but a sturdy oak, defiant of her little strength."

So he fortified himself in his position. He did not believe that Madeline could, or would, hold out for any great length of time. He thought it more than probable, that, ere bedtime, she would return home, humbled and repentant. She was subject to sudden and strong revulsions of feeling—was impulsive, and acted often under the first inspiration of an impulse. She had so acted on going away; and a change of feeling would bring her home again.

The hours passed, but Madeline did not return. Jansen found himself deceived. He did not grow softer, but harder, as the time wore on, and it became more and more clearly evident, that Madeline would not be home that night.

Ten o'clock had been rung out by the time piece on the mantel, and Jansen was sitting, crouched in a large easy-chair—the image of calm repose without, but all agitation within—when he heard the street door bell. He did not stir, but listened intently. A servant passed along the hall. As she opened the door, he held his breathe. A voice. Not a woman's voice! He felt a chill of disappointment. A man had entered, and the servant had shown him into the parlor.

"A gentleman wishes to see you, sir. Mr. Lawrence."

"Very well. I will be down."

The servant retired.

"Mr. Lawrence! What can he want, at this hour?" said Jansen. "It's rather strange!" His thought went, naturally, to his wife, and connected her with the visit. Mrs. Lawrence was an old friend of Madeline's. After perplexing himself for a little while as to the import of this visit, Jansen went to the parlor. Carefully schooling his exterior, he met Mr.

Lawrence with a quiet courtesy, that completely hid his real state of mind. For a few moments, the two men looked inquiringly at each other. In surprise at Jansen's manner, Mr. Lawrence at first thought the absence of his wife unknown to him.

"Mrs. Jansen is at my house," he said, coming at once to the purport of his visit.

There followed no start—no look of surprise—no marked change of any kind.

"Is she?" The coldness of voice—the indifference of manner—chilled Mr. Lawrence. He moved back a step or two. Jansen did not ask him to resume the seat from which he had arisen.

"Do you wish to communicate with her?" asked Mr. Lawrence, uttering the first thought that came into his mind.

"No, sir!" Jansen shook his head, and shut his mouth closely. His voice and mien were icy.

"Good evening!" said Mr. Lawrence, bowing stiffly, and retiring towards the door.

"Good evening," returned Jansen, not relaxing a feature, or softening his tones.

"The next time I go on a fool's errand," so Mr. Lawrence spoke with himself as he shut the door behind him, "I'll be a greater fool than I am now. I might have known how it was! He's turned her out of doors for vicious conduct; and I'm served right for meddling in the matter. All Jessie's geese are swans. She'll keep to her faith in this woman after her vileness is known to all the world. But, she shall not harbor in my house; I'm resolved on that. The air that my wife breathes shall not be polluted by one like her. Fough! I'm mad with myself! What will Jansen think? He'll put my wife on a par with this woman. Their names will be spoken together!"

This thought chafed him sharply. He knew how pure and true his wife was, and he could not bear that her good name should be sullied by a slanderous breath.

"I'll settle this matter!" So he continued talking with himself as he hurried homeward, gathering hardness by the way. "Sick or well, in the morning she goes from my house. Jessie must stand aside. I will not be argued with, persuaded, nor set at naught. So vile a woman shall not poison the atmosphere of my home."

"I knew just how it was!" said Mr. Lawrence, angrily, on getting home and meeting his wife.

"Did you see Mr. Jansen?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, her voice choking a little.

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"I told him that his wife was at my house; to which he answered, 'Is she?' as coldly as if I had mentioned the most trivial circumstance. He did not seem even annoyed. 'Do you wish to communicate with her?' I asked, and he said, curtly, 'No, sir!' My next words were, 'Good evening,' to which he replied, 'Good evening,' when I came away. Now, isn't that beautiful! What must a wife be—what must a wife have done—when her husband thus acts towards her? She has left him of her own will, or been turned out of doors, and he doesn't care a farthing what becomes of her. There's one thing certain, Jessie, she cannot remain here. I won't have your name mixed up with hers. On that I am resolved. To-morrow morning she must go away."

Mrs. Lawrence did not reply. She had dropped her eyes away from those of her husband, and was looking down at the floor. Her face, which had flushed eagerly as he came in, had already grown pale. She looked hurt—stunned—grieved.

"I knew she was a vile, wicked woman!" Mr. Lawrence spoke with indignation.

Mrs. Lawrence only shook her head.

"The devil would be a saint in your esteem, if—"

Mr. Lawrence stopped. The eyes of his wife had lifted themselves from the floor, and were resting steadily in his face.

"And this is all that passed between you and Mr. Jansen?" she said.

"All. And wasn't that enough? What more would you have had him say? A husband may not choose to denounce his wife."

"It is always safest to infer good," said Mrs. Lawrence.

"And so take a thief into your house, under the pleasant delusion that he is honest. No, Jessie, it is always safest to infer evil."

"And so hurt the innocent. I am no believer in this philosophy. Good or evil, Madeleine cannot hurt me. But, evil I will not credit against her in the absence of proof."

"In the absence of proof! You amaze me, Jessie! Common report has long been against her, and now her husband has turned her from his house. What more do you want?"

"Report is no proof, Mr. Lawrence. As to her having been turned out of doors by her husband, we have only your inference. She may have left him of her own free will. More probably, in a state of partial derangement, which he did not perceive, and, therefore,

remains blind and angry. I knew Madeline intimately, and cannot be mistaken in her. Be her faults and errors what they may, I do not believe her impure. Impulsive, strong-willed, thoughtless, imprudent, if you will; all these, but not evil. I must have very conclusive proof to credit this."

"Well, it's no use to talk, Jessie," answered Mr. Lawrence, in a most positive manner. "She is not going to remain in this house, after to-night. Bag and baggage, she must be off to-morrow morning. I don't want any of your 'ifs,' or 'buts.' I want you to see that what I say comes to pass."

To this, Mrs. Lawrence made no reply. Her face was clouded and troubled. She turned a little aside from her husband; not looking acquiescence. He saw this, and commenced walking the floor, fuming, and threatening magnificently, as weak men, who find themselves amid baffling circumstances, do sometimes. This was only "beating the air," as he felt, and his state of turbulence in a little while subsided.

Mr. Jansen sat down, after his visitor's hasty withdrawal, not feeling altogether satisfied with what he had done. To say the least, he had been neither courteous nor gentlemanly. He remembered, that Mr. Lawrence lived in Brooklyn, a distance of over two miles from his residence in New York, and that the evening was far gone. Something was due to him. He had taken no small trouble in giving information about his wife. Jansen's love of approbation was hurt. He desired to stand well in the eyes of other people; to be always right before the world. But, he was not right in this—he stood self-convicted of an unpardonable rudeness.

This was not the only source of dissatisfaction. He was far from being indifferent in regard to his wife, or what concerned her. Instead, he was deeply interested, his inward sense hearkening after her departing footsteps with painful eagerness. Any sound, any sign, any shadow of intelligence would have been gladly received; only pride would not let him show the least desire, or take a single step in the direction his heart was going. He need not have taken a step in this case—need scarcely have asked a question. To his thirsty lips a cup had been raised, and in blind self-will he had dashed it aside.

"Over in Brooklyn, at the house of Mr. Lawrence! What can she be doing there?" So at last the burden of thought found relief in words.

He remembered Mrs. Lawrence as one of Madeline's early acquaintances. He had liked her, for her intelligence and womanly bearing; and had more than once regretted that in his wife's absorption among more showy and specious friends, she had virtually dropped this one. Mr. Lawrence, whom he met occasionally in business, he did not like.

What was she doing there? He might have known. The information he now so desired to possess, had been just within his reach—tendered, not asked—and he had put it roughly aside. The fact that she had gone to the house of Mr. Lawrence, was favorable to her in his eyes. As he thought of it, a sense of relief came. Mrs. Lawrence was a sensible woman—free from all modern fancies and transcendentalisms. One from whom good advice and good influence might be expected. She would counsel Madeline for her good—advise her to return to her husband and her duty. Jansen grew more confident of this, as thought dwelt on the fact that his wife was with this old and true friend. The case looked hopeful—Madeline would find no encouragement for her perversity with Mrs. Lawrence. Under her better influence, she would be led to see how wrong she was acting. She would come back, humbled and penitent; he would be vindicated. Pride, self-will, love of rule and predominance, conceit of superiority—all these would remain untouched. Master in his own house, with not a prerogative yielded, he would continue to be.

The satisfaction born of thought like this, was soon marred by questions as to how his unmanly repulse of Mr. Lawrence would effect the case. Would it not give strong color to any representations his wife might make in regard to him, and tend to draw Mrs. Lawrence over to her side? There were probabilities in this view of the case that troubled him. But, there was no helping it now. He was not the man to concede anything; to humiliate himself by coming down from any assumed position. He could not write to Mr. Lawrence, nor go to him. Could not make the faintest sign without losing something that his narrow soul held dear. So he must stand still and wait. If Madeline came back, well; if she "persisted in her folly and crime," the consequences to him must be accepted and borne. He thought coolly to his conclusions, not wavering for an instant. With him, there was no quick fusing of thought into determinations, that hardened rapidly, then fused quickly again, flowing into new forms. Nothing of the kind. He had no versatility of character, so

to speak. All his ratiocinations moved in a narrow circle, with constant precipitations upon old ideas, which grew and grew into daily increasing importance in his eyes.

Another thought disturbed the tranquil state which had begun to settle over his feelings. Might not the utter indifference he had manifested in regard to his wife, have the effect to create unjust suspicions against her in the eyes of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence? Might it not lead them to turn away from her, and so leave her adrift, to float with some evil tide on a disastrous shore? Well might this thought trouble him!

CHAPTER XIII.

Mrs. Jansen had recovered from her fainting fit while Mr. Lawrence was in New York. In the excitement occasioned by the swoon, Mrs. Lawrence had urged her husband to go over to the city, and inform Mr. Jansen of his wife's presence in their house.

"She is not in her right mind," was the appeal and argument. "I am sure that she has escaped from a sick room. Mr. Jansen must be in terrible suspense and alarm."

This did not seem altogether improbable, and so Mr. Lawrence went over to the city. His reception we have seen. During his absence, Mrs. Jansen had recovered. The truth then came out, told with a mingling of sobs and tears—flashes of womanly anger and resolute words. Mrs. Lawrence listened in painful silence and with brimming eyes, not venturing, in her friend's state of excitement, to offer counsel.

"I am a leaf, drifting away on a strange current, Jessie," said Madeline, in the calmness that succeeded, when she had told her story. "A tender thought of you, as one always loved, has borne me into the peaceful eddy of your home. Let me stay for just a little while—a very little while. I will then float off again into the current, to be carried, Heaven only knows whither!"

"We will talk of this to-morrow, dear friend," was answered. "The Providence which led you hither, will guide you in the future. To-night let thought rest, and all your hastily formed purposes recede, and be as if they had not been. Sleep gives a healthier tone to mind as well as body. You will be calmer and have clearer sight in the morning. I will leave you now." And Mrs. Lawrence kissed Madeline tenderly. Sleep came quickly. There was an opiate in the kiss which love had laid on lips and eyelids.

Madeline did not join the family at breakfast-time next morning. Mrs. Lawrence had gone into her room early, and found her waking and weeping.

"Do not rise yet," she had said. "We breakfast early, so that Mr. Lawrence may get off to business. I will come to you after he has gone."

"He is not pleased at my being here." Something in the voice of Mrs. Lawrence, as she mentioned her husband's name, betrayed to the quick ears of Madeline the truth. "I might have known this," she added, with a shade of bitterness—"all men are against us. But I will not trouble him long."

"Don't talk so, Maddy, dear; it does no good, and hurts your state of mind," returned Mrs. Lawrence, with increased affectionateness of manner. "Men do not always see as we see. How should they? They misunderstand us, and we, it is quite possible, as often misunderstand them. Let us be charitable—forbearing—not ready to think evil. We get down to the heart of a thing by a quicker way than it is given men to go, and should be patient with their slowness. If they are wrong-headed sometimes, we may often be perverse in feeling, and I have an impression that there is more hope of the wrong head than of the wrong heart. There! there!" And Mrs. Lawrence laid her finger on her friend's lips—"I did not mean to provoke a discussion: I was speaking only in apology for the other sex. Lie still for a little while longer. I will come to you in half an hour; then you shall rise and have breakfast: the day will be ours."

As Mr. Lawrence stood in the hall, with hat and gloves on, ready to leave, he said to his wife—

"Now, understand me, Jessie, that woman is not to harbor here. I do not wish to find her in the house when I come home."

"Don't give yourself unnecessary trouble," was answered by Mrs. Lawrence, her quietness of tone contrasting with her husband's ruffled manner—"Madeline will not intrude herself. I think you will not find her here when you come home; but, if she leaves to-day, it will be against my wishes. I would rather have her remain for a week. Don't frown, and look so angry and impatient! It is for us to do good when God gives the opportunity. This opportunity He has now given. A woman, still pure and true to all high ends, as far as she can see them in the blindness of hurt feelings and under bad counsel, is cutting herself away from safe moorings. If she drift off

into the world without chart or compass, there is danger of wreck and loss of everything. Ours may be the high privilege of saving her."

"Thank you! Don't say *ours*!" gruffly, yet weakly responded Mr. Lawrence. "If I have any 'mission' in the world, which I doubt, it doesn't lie in that direction; and I tell you once for all, Jessie, that I don't mean to have you mixed up with any of these things. Let her drift off, if she wants to; what is it your business or mine? If you stop to draw back into harbor every vagrant-souled woman that breaks from her moorings, you'll have enough work on hand for a legion of angels."

"If I can do, in a single instance, the work in which angels delight, will you step in between me and that work?" Mrs. Lawrence's calm eyes rested upon her husband. Her voice, clear and firm, yet impressive, subdued the captious spirit that dwelt within him. She stood brave and strong before him, not in personal defiance, but in the strength of a right will, that illustrated her husband's thought in spite of his prejudice and passion.

"You'll have it your own way, I suppose," he answered, pettishly. "Women always do, husbands are nothing now-a-days. Good for working and providing—that's about all. But it doesn't signify. I set my face as steel against you all. Harbor the woman, if you will, but understand that in doing so you set your husband at defiance. You needn't expect me to play the smiling host. Keep her out of my way, if you don't want her insulted."

So, warning, as confused thought came into speech again, Mr. Lawrence talked after his irrational way when excited by opposing influences.

"My husband is too much of a gentleman," quietly answered Mrs. Lawrence, "to offer in his own house an insult to a suffering and helpless woman."

Mr. Lawrence, an impatient sentence on his lips that his wife could not make out, turned off abruptly, passing through the street door, which he shut with a jar that was felt over the house.

After Madeline had risen and taken some breakfast, the two friends retired to Mrs. Lawrence's chamber.

"You blame me, Jessie, I know," said Mrs. Jansen; "but you do not comprehend my case. As a wife and equal, I would cling to my husband through good and evil report—in sickness, poverty, disgrace—under any and all circumstances of outside wrong and oppres-

sion. His love would bind me by cords impossible to be broken. As a slave, in confessed inferiority, I cannot remain in his house. Better for us to live apart than in strife. This issue I have made in going away. I left for him, written in plain, earnest tender words, a letter, clearly stating the case as it stands between us. If he answers that letter, and says return, I will go back, hoping and rejoicing. If he keeps silence, I shall never cross his threshold again."

"Purposes that involve so much ought never to be made under strong excitement," said Mrs. Lawrence. "A wife should bear and forbear a great deal, before taking the step that you have taken."

"I have borne until longer forbearance would be a crime against my sex," replied Mrs. Jansen, her eyes kindling.

"Touching the crime against your sex, Madeline, I hardly think that an issue in this case with your husband. The trouble is between you and him, and should not be complicated with remote considerations. You cannot determine your course wisely, on general principles or effects. Everything must be narrowed down to the relation existing between you and your husband."

"I am not so sure of that," said Mrs. Jansen. "No individual stands alone in the world; no act is without its good or bad influence on society. The rights and happiness of our sex, should be dear to every woman. Too long have we disregarded them, leaving the weak without counsel or advocate. Now, the time has come when every true woman, if she does her duty, will see to it, that so far as her acts speak to the world, they speak against man's tyrannies. Mine shall, even though I be burned at the stake!"

"Madeline," answered Mrs. Lawrence, "nothing tells for good on society like right individual action. Not heroic action before the world, but self-denying and loving deeds in the sphere of private life. This separation from your husband, if it should, unfortunately, continue, will do an amount of harm to our sex, impossible to estimate."

"Harm! I do not understand you!"

"The deepest wrong a woman can receive must always come from her own hand. Others cannot harm us vitally, if we are true to ourselves. They may assault and annoy us—may wrong us externally—keep back the rights and privileges to which we are entitled by nature—but, cannot touch the inner life, if that be the dwelling-place of virtue, truth and

purity. Your example in this act of separation, may lead others of our sex, not well based in principle, to follow in the same path, and so abandon their duty and harm their souls. No. By all that is just, by all that is heroic, by all that is right, no!"

"He case must always be a hard one that justifies the step you are taking. Harder, a great deal harder, Madeline, than I am satisfied yours has been. Carl may have narrow views of his marital rights, and he may be self-willed and persistent in his assertion of these rights; all of which must chafe a woman of your temperament. But, he is a virtuous and an honorable man; and that is a great deal. I know pure, sweet, loving women, whose husbands are brutalized sensualists, or men without honor. Their lot is a terrible one compared with yours; but, they do not abandon their places, nor relinquish their duties because the men they married of free choice have proved unworthy. The compact is, until death do part them. Their feet walk in difficult places—they have sore tribulations—but they are growing, daily, unto the beauty of angels; fitter for heaven. Every time I meet them, I perceive an odor of new blossoming flowers, the promise of immortal fruitage. They have not been hurt, interiorly, by their unhappy marriages, because they would not hurt themselves. Beware, then, my dear friend! If harm come, the blow will be from your own hand."

"I am not able to see in the light of your views," answered Mrs. Jansen. "They involve the old notions men are so fond of preaching about. They may be, and do, what they please; but women must be saints and angels! Now, I am human, and do not pretend to be anything else. I have human wants, human rights, human passions; and recognize the human right of self-protection. If I am assailed, I will defend myself—if wronged, I will seek to right the wrong. The assailer and the wrong-doer shall not have immunity and encouragement through my tame submission. No, no, Jessie! I am not one of your meek women-angels."

Mrs. Lawrence sighed, dropped her eyes to the floor, and remained silent. To argue with Madeline, in her present temper, would, she saw, only lead her into stronger states of self-justification. A few moments passed, when Mrs. Jansen continued—

"There have been martyrs to the right in all ages; and martyrdoms must continue so long as there is evil, and consequent wrong, in the world. Men set tyrants at defiance, battle for freedom, and achieve independence. They would be slaves, and unworthy of freedom, if this were not so. And shall woman be the only coward in the world! The only slave! No. By all that is just, by all that is heroic, by all that is right, no!"

Still Mrs. Lawrence kept silent.

"You do not see as I do," said Madeline, her voice dropping down from its enthusiasm.

"No; you see from one stand-point, and I from another," was replied. "As to whether your view or mine is best, depends on the relation of the stand-point to the object. We should never forget, that unless we change our position several times, we cannot look upon all sides of a question. Where momentous results hang upon our right decision of such a question, we should determine with great caution, and only after many changes of our stand-point. I pray you, dear friend, to have deliberation. Take counsel of doubt, rather than of partially enlightened reason."

"What would you have me do, Jessie? Go back and ask my husband's pardon?"

"No. A word on this unhappy incident in your lives need not pass between you. You can return and be silent. The dangerous impediment, that now stands like a mountain crag between you, is pride. He will not concede anything—nor will you. Without doubt, he has repented sorely of his part in the strife; but pride, resting on his narrow views of marriage, will not let him acknowledge his error. If you quietly return, your presence in the old places will, I am sure, make his heart leap with joy. He may hide this pleasure; doubtless will. But, in the future, he will be very careful how he pushes you to another extremity. All may yet be saved, dear Madeline! Oh, let me be your counselor in this thing. Good will come of it, I know. A step or two farther in the way you are advancing, and all may be lost! A few steps retraced, and a whole life of peace may be secured. Go back—go back dear Madeline! Anything less than this will be fatal to your happiness."

"It has ceased to be a question of happiness," replied Madeline, her voice falling into a mournful undertone. "That is past. The question now is, Freedom or Slavery? I must decide for myself which will be most endurable. And I have made the decision. If my husband writes to me, and says, simply, 'Come back,' I will accept it, gladly, as an evidence, that I am to live with him as an equal. If he does not so ask my return—will

not concede anything—then the die is cast. We stand forever apart.”

“I had hoped, dear friend,” said Mrs. Lawrence, with a sadness of tone she made no effort to conceal, “that better thoughts would have ruled in your mind. That you would have seen the duty of yielding something. Of going back a few steps in the wrong way so hastily taken.”

“Not hastily, Jessie,” answered Madeline. “Not in anger. For months I have looked to the issue that has come. I saw it approaching, and weighed and measured the consequences involved, until I understood their magnitude. They are coming upon me, and I accept them as lesser evils. I bow my head and stoop my shoulders to the new burdens I am destined to bear. They will be lighter for my spirit than have been those I cast aside. As our day may demand, so shall our strength be. I have faith in my power of endurance. I shall be equal to the destiny that awaits me. In suffering, the heart grows strong. Heroism is born of trial and pain.”

“It is not heroism that you want,” said Mrs. Lawrence, in reply—“I speak plainly as your true friend—but self-denial. Pride has risen in your heart, and made you blind to duty. You are thinking more of freedom, as you call it, than of a useful life. Of what is due to yourself, more than of what is due to others. You say that you love your husband; now, love forgets itself in desire to bless its object. It does not tend to separation, but conjunction. It will forgive much; it will endure much; it will suffer much. None are perfect here. The heirloom in every life is error and evil. It is mine, it is yours, it is your husband’s. We must look for inharmonious action in the contact of two lives—especially when the contact is so close as that between married partners. It is the offspring of our inherited defects. The worst remedy for this is antagonism, no matter from which side it may come. It is, in fact, no remedy at all; but a means of increasing the evil. If your husband has false views of marriage, love will enlighten him sooner than anger. If he vainly imagines that he is superior, let him discover how far above all self-assertion and pride of position, are self-control, and the patient endurance of a temporary invasion of rights for the sake of an ultimate and higher good.”

But Madeline shook her head in strong rejection of all this. It was in complete opposition to her state of feeling; and with her, feeling for the most part held reason in control.

“Men,” she answered, “are in the love of ruling over the weak. They domineer and exact whenever in liberty to do so. To yield to them is to strengthen them. Submit to one set of manacles, and they immediately go to work to forge new ones, until the poor slave is bound in every limb and entirely helpless. If there be not resolute opposition, everything is lost.”

It was all in vain. Mrs. Lawrence could not influence her mistaken friend; who, in every argument strengthened herself in the position she had assumed. At last, with a troubled feeling, she gave up all attempts to influence her. Naturally came next the question as to Mrs. Jansen’s future life.

“If your husband does not say ‘Come back,’ what then, Madeline?” was asked.

Mrs. Lawrence saw, by the falling of light out of Madeline’s countenance, that this question touched her closely. A sigh, half checked, betrayed the concern it awakened. She did not answer.

“If your husband does not, of his own free will, make a settlement on you, I scarcely think the courts will compel him to do so. Sufficient legal cause for a separation could hardly be shown.”

There was a flashing of Madeline’s beautiful brown eyes.

“And you think so meanly of me!” she said, half angrily, “Jessie! If I cannot be his wife and equal, I will not touch his money. No—no. I am not of the sordid quality you seem to imagine. I trust, that a high principle governs me in all that I am doing.”

“You must live.”

“He that feedeth the young lions will not see me lack,” was bravely answered. “The world is wide. I shall find my place.”

“What are your immediate purposes? It is my deep concern for you that prompts this question. Where are you going?”

Again the light faded out of Mrs. Jansen’s countenance.

“The heroic is all well enough, Madeline; but nature has vulgar needs that will not brook delay. You must eat and drink—you must have clothing, and a home. If you cast yourself loose from the strong arm that makes provision and gives protection, you must look to yourself.”

“I know all that. I have counted the cost, Jessie.”

“Not all the cost, I fear. In the very first step you found pains and penalties not dreamed of.”

"Why do you say that?" asked Madeline, in a tone of surprise. She had not spoken of her experience with Mrs. Windall.

"My husband saw you in the street yesterday. It was late. Your appearance was so singular, that it attracted attention."

"My appearance! What was singular about it?" asked Madeline, with a crimsoning face.

"Just how you looked, he did not say. But the impression made on him was strong. You were driving along, he said, like a crazy person. I was filled with painful anxiety on your account. If the first steps in this new way you have chosen, are so environed with difficulties, you may well tremble at what lies farther in advance. Where are you going? I ask that question again, for that is first to be considered. You left your husband's house yesterday morning, and at nine o'clock in the evening came here seeking shelter for the night. Don't be offended. I am coming down to the naked truth—calling things by their true names. It is best sometimes, and leaves no room for error. You know what befel during the unhappy intervening hours. I fear that you had much pain, much disappointment, much humiliation crowded into them. If it had not been so, you would scarcely have crossed the river, alone, at a late hour, and come to me. Oh, Madeline! By the memory of this first day's painful experience stop where you are. This is only the beginning of sorrows."

Madeline's lips quivered. Her eyes filled with tears. Her friend's reference to that one day's trials restored the memory of some things that gave pangs like dagger thrusts. Ah yes! There had been disappointments and humiliations that touched her to the very quick. Life had suddenly put on new aspects, fearful to contemplate.

"Dear friend!" she said, weeping, "let me ask of you one favor. It shall not be very burdensome. I am in great extremity. One door is shut behind me, and another has not yet opened. Let me stay with you just one week. After that, I will go my way."

How eagerly would Mrs. Lawrence have given her consent, if she alone were to be considered. Mrs. Jansen saw the shade that crept into her eyes, and noted the hesitation that lingered over the sentence that was to constitute her friend's reply.

"O Madeline! Madeline!" So came the answer. "If you could look into my heart—if you could see how it yearns over you—if you could know all my love, all my present

anxiety on your account! Dear friend! Let me again entreat you to go home. There is a mist before your eyes—you do not see clearly; you have lost your way, and every step in advance will carry you in the wrong direction. Get back, and quickly into the old, safe regions, where you know the landmarks; where your strong tower stands—where your walled gardens are safe from intruders; where enemies cannot find you."

Mrs. Lawrence was affectionate in her manner—she spoke with loving ardor. But, she had not answered the plain request of Madeline—"Let me stay just one week."

The tears dried up in the eyes of Madeline. Her face grew pale. With a thick huskiness of voice, she said—

"I thank you for your interest, Jessie, and for your well meant advice. But, it is useless to argue with, or persuade me. It is not with the past that I am struggling. The leaf that I have turned my hand shall not put back again. It is with the present and the future that I have now to deal."

She said no more. How was Mrs. Lawrence to reply? If she alone were interested, door as well as heart would open to her friend. But, to grant the request of Madeline would give cause of anger to her husband. And she knew him well enough to be certain, that his treatment of Mrs. Jansen, under the circumstances, would involve so much that was offensive, that she would not endure it for a single day.

"If I alone were concerned," she said, "the case would be different." Then paused.

"Say no more," quickly answered Madeline, the fire coming back to eyes that were dull an instant before. "It is the old inadequacy—the will behind your will. Ah well! Don't look sad about it, Jessie. I understand it all."

Something in the manner of Mrs. Jansen, touched a sensitive place in the feelings of Mrs. Lawrence.

"Pardon me," she answered, assuming an air of dignity; "but you are treading on forbidden ground. Whatever is personal to myself, must be held sacred by my friends."

This rebuke partially offended Mrs. Jansen. She made a cold apology, and in words not well chosen. It was not her habit to think twice on a sentence before giving it to speech.

It was in vain that Mrs. Lawrence, soon losing all unpleasant feeling towards Madeline, sought to come near her. By tacit consent, the thoughts just in their minds, were left un-

spoken—so there was no point of free intercourse—and so, they stood apart. Mrs. Lawrence, knowing her husband's state of feeling, did not think it right to ask Madeline to stay for the period mentioned.

"You are not going," she said to her, as she came down, about midday, with her bonnet on.

"Yes. If Carl replies to my letter, I must get his answer."

"You will return, if the answer fails, or is unsatisfactory, and spend at least one more night with me."

"No, Jessie; it would not be agreeable to your husband, and might disturb pleasant relations."

This was unkindly said—nay, worse, in a tone meant to wound. It was a thrust.

But, Mrs. Lawrence did not feel the slightest pain. Her heart was too full of pity for her friend—too heavily burdened with anxiety on her account. She kissed her at the door, saying—

"If it does not go well with you to-day, Madeline, come back in the evening. You know my heart. May God teach you the right lesson of duty, and lead your feet in the right paths. Oh, Madeline! Ask Him to enlighten your eyes, and show you the way. Look to Him, and not to yourself."

Their hands were clasped for a moment, in a tight pressure—tightest on the part of Mrs. Lawrence—and then, not looking back, Madeline went out blindly and desperately, to go she knew not whither.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Out in the World.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Is that woman here?" It was the question of Mr. Lawrence as he came in at evening.

"No," was the simple answer of his wife.

"Thank fortune for that!"

"She may come back and stay all night," said Mrs. Lawrence.

"You asked her to do so, of course!"

"Yes; but the chances are against her returning. I scarcely think we shall see her."

"The affair is town-talk already," remarked Mr. Lawrence.

"What?"

"Mrs. Jansen's quarrel with, and abandonment of her husband. I heard it in half a dozen places."

"What was said? What cause was assigned?" asked Mrs. Lawrence.

"Oh, forty reasons were given?"

"Of which thirty-nine were sheer fabrications," said Mrs. Lawrence.

"I don't know anything about that. The most plausible, to my mind, was this:—That Mr. Jansen had positively forbidden any further association with certain men and women of doubtful reputation; and that her ladyship had gone off in a huff, expecting him to repent, humble himself, and entreat of her to return and do just as she pleased. But, it is pretty generally held by those who know Jansen, that she will find it harder to get back than she imagined; and that the only door will be through a humiliation of herself, a confession of wrong, and a promise to do better. Jansen doesn't say much—don't throw his arms about, bluster, and talk large; but he is steady to any purpose as a steel spring. There was too much at stake when my lady hazarded that throw of the dice!"

"What other reasons were given?" asked Mrs. Lawrence.

"Oh, I can't remember a third of them. One was, that she wished to make a trip to Europe in company with a gentleman and his wife, not on the best terms with each other, who will go in the next steamer. Jansen demurred, and thence came a fierce quarrel. Another, that she wanted him to buy a house in Fifth Avenue, to which he positively objected. Another report connects her name with that of Mr. Guyton. It is said, that they are often seen on the street, and are alto-

gether too intimate. The fact is, Jessie, that woman must have been very imprudent; if not, why so many stories about her? I trust she will not show her face here again! I don't want your name mentioned in the same breath with hers."

Mrs. Lawrence did not reply. Her thought was following, yearningly, after Madeline, and questioning as to her future, over which hung a dark and threatening cloud. The evening passed, but Madeline returned not to the house of her friend. Two or three times during the evening, as Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence sat, the one reading to himself, and the other sewing—the former, letting his book drop from his eyes, indulged in hard sentences against Mrs. Jansen, to which his wife made no other response than simply to look at him in her grave, quiet way, with as much reproof in her glances as she felt might be given without irritation.

All the next day passed without word of her unhappy friend reaching Mrs. Lawrence. When her husband came home in the evening, he brought no news of her. He had met Mr. Jansen on the street twice, each time receiving a polite, but rather stiff bow. There was nothing unusual in his manner—nothing from which he could infer the continued absence of his wife.

"It's my opinion," said Mr. Lawrence. "that one day's experience has been enough for our high-strung friend, and that she is safely at home again. It's all very fine for the bird to escape from its cage, and strike free wings upon the sunny air. But, in night and storm, in cold and hunger, in presence of the hawk, how gladly would it get back into its prison again."

"I pray that you may be right in your opinion, and that Madeline is with her husband," remarked Mrs. Lawrence, but not in a tone that expressed confidence.

Days passed, and still no certain intelligence about Madeline was received. To end this suspense, Mrs. Lawrence called at Mr. Jansen's house, and asked for her, as if she believed her to be at home.

"She's not here, ma'am," replied the servant, who had opened the door. Mrs. Lawrence stepped into the vestibule, in order to question the servant, and get from her all about her friend that she might be induced to communicate.

"When do you expect her to return?" she asked.

"I don't know, ma'am."

A chill of disappointment ran along the nerves of Mrs. Lawrence.

"Has she been back since she went away last week?"

"No, ma'am."

"Have you heard from her?"

"No, ma'am."

The servant answered these questions with evident reluctance. Mrs. Lawrence had closed the street door.

"Can't I sit down and rest for a few minutes?" she said. "I have come over from Brooklyn, and feel very tired."

"Oh, certainly, ma'am," answered the servant, showing her into the parlor. She sat down, and the servant stood near.

"You can't tell me anything about Mrs. Jansen?" said Mrs. Lawrence.

"No, ma'am." Still with a reserve that was almost embarrassing.

"I am not asking you these questions from simple curiosity. I am an old friend, and a warm friend of Mrs. Jansen; and I want to know something certain about her. She was at my house on Wednesday, and staid all night."

"At your house!" a flash of interest swept across the servant's face.

"Yes, she came to my house in the evening, long after it was dark, and staid all night. In the morning she went away."

"Did she say where she was going, ma'am?"

"No."

The troubled look, which Mrs. Lawrence had noticed from the first, deepened.

"Oh, I wish I knew where she was!" exclaimed the servant, breaking out of her reserve, and wringing her hands together.

"Doesn't Mr. Jansen know?" inquired Mrs. Lawrence.

"I'm afraid not. If he does, he won't tell us anything."

"You have asked him?"

"Oh, yes. I ask him every time he comes home; but, he answers me short. He don't like us to question him, ma'am."

"He's very much troubled?"

"Yes, ma'am; of course he's troubled. But, he don't show it as some men would."

Mrs. Lawrence did not feel that it would be honorable to press the servant any farther, though a crowd of questions were in her thoughts. The main facts were learned—that Mrs. Jansen had not returned home, and that the servants, at least, were in ignorance as to where she had gone. She went away, feeling sadder than when she called.

Weeks passed, and still no word came to Mrs. Lawrence about her friend. She enquired of her husband, every day, if he had learned anything about her, but the answer was always the same. Madeline had dropped out of sight, like a foundering vessel, and there remained no sign upon the surface to say where she had gone down.

The weeks gathered into months, and yet the mystery that hung over Mrs. Jansen was not solved. Her husband remained as ignorant in regard to her as the small circle of interested friends, who, like Mrs. Lawrence, kept her in troubled remembrance. He need not have remained in such ignorance. Had he bent just a little from his cold, proud impassiveness—just far enough to have placed, through proper agencies, a follower on her path—he might have kept himself advised as to all her movements. But, this would have been felt as yielding or conceding something. The fact might, in some way, come to her knowledge, and be wrongly construed. She had gone of her own will; and when she came back, she must come of her own will. That was the position he had assumed, and which he resolved to maintain. Suffer what he might, he would yield nothing. That would be to lower the dignity of his manhood.

This much must be said for Carl Jansen, he suffered intensely. He had loved his wife deeply—still loved her. For the words spoken so imperatively on that fatal morning, he had repented many times—and many times wished they had never been uttered. But, once said, they might not be recalled without humiliation such as pride would never brook. How many times had he come home, during the first few weeks of separation, fondly hoping to find his wife in her old place! He would not have welcomed her with any show of gladness. She would not have known of the sunlight and warmth that swept into his heart. But he would have been kind and gentle—perhaps tender. He would have been more guarded in the future, and less inclined to put hindrances in her way. Her liberty would have been larger. Alas for her!—alas for him!—that she did not return.

CHAPTER XV.

Let us follow the proud, sensitive young creature who dropped so suddenly beneath the surface of society, and see how it fared with her. On leaving the house of Mrs. Lawrence, Madeline crossed the river, and went to Mrs. Woodbine's. Her reception was

not with the old cordiality. The false friend who had first led her mind astray, could not forgive the independent action that went adverse to her judgment. While claiming for herself the largest liberty she chose to assume, she was always impatient of freedom in others when it touched her will, be it ever so lightly.

"Have you a letter for me?" asked Madeline. She was not able to conceal the suspense that was in her mind.

"No." How like a verdict of "guilty," to a waiting prisoner, fell the word upon her ears! The brave heart drooped. The courage failed.

"You expected a letter?" said Mrs. Woodbine, who noticed the disappointment her answer had produced.

"I thought there might be one," returned Mrs. Jansen, rallying herself.

"You did not take my advice," remarked Mrs. Woodbine, with a distant air.

"No. I could not."

"You are wrong, my young friend; wrong!" Mrs. Woodbine spoke with emphasis. "And you will see it one of these days. I never dreamed of your carrying things, on so trifling a provocation, to this extremity. Pray, be advised by one who has seen a great deal more of the world than you have. Return to your husband—"

"Never!" exclaimed Madeline, interrupting Mrs. Woodbine. "Never, unless he says 'Come back.'"

"Which he may never say!"

The color receded from Madeline's face; but her eyes grew hard, and her lips rigid.

"So be it," she answered, huskily. "I have counted the cost."

Mrs. Woodbine drew herself up coldly, but made no reply. Madeline sat for a short time, and then arose, with an embarrassed air.

"You're not going," said Mrs. Woodbine, in such an unsympathizing voice that it was as if she had said, "go, and go quickly!"

"Yes."

They stood facing each other for a few moments.

"Good morning." Madeline did not extend a hand.

"Why are you in such a hurry? Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Woodbine. The interest was only a pretence, and Madeline was not deceived.

"Good morning." She repeated the words.

"Good morning. When shall I see you again?"

"I will call to-morrow, or the next day, to see if there is anything for me."

"Do. I shall be glad to see you. Oh, by the way, Mrs. Windall was here last evening." Madeline could not help a start. Mrs. Woodbine's eyes were upon her, reading the expression of her countenance.

"Was she?" Mrs. Jansen tried to seem indifferent.

"Yes, and she was very anxious about you. It seems from what she intimated, that you gave her the slip. I was glad to hear it! Take my advice, and keep out of her way. She is a dangerous woman, and may lead you into harm."

"Dangerous in what respect?" asked Madeline.

"Oh, as to that, I can't speak definitely. I've never thought her a person of well based principles."

"Do you know any wrong of Mrs. Windall?"

"Well, no, I can't say that I do; but people are in the habit of speaking lightly of her. Situated as you are, Mrs. Jansen, carefulness in regard to those with whom you associate is a thing of the first moment. We are judged by the company we keep. Your life may be as pure as that of an angel; yet the breath of slander will be on your name. You cannot escape, in the way you are now walking, no matter with what circumspection you move. The most innocent act may be tortured into crime."

"How long have you known Mrs. Windall?" asked Madeline.

"Not over six months."

"Who, or what, is she?"

"That question, I find it difficult to answer. The fact is, I know little, if anything, about her; except that she has no sensibility, and intrudes herself whenever she can find opportunity, whether she be welcome or not. Her presence has always been disagreeable to me. If you asked me why, I might not be able to give a satisfactory reason; but such is the case. I repeat the advice, keep away from her; and if she seeks you out, and tries to fasten herself upon you, push her off."

"You cannot dislike her more than I do."

The door bell rung, and a servant passed down the hall.

"If that should be her!" said Mrs. Jansen, with a look of real apprehension.

"Most likely it is," returned Mrs. Woodbine. "I saw, yesterday, that she was determined to find you. She knew that any

letter you might receive would be directed to my care, and asked if one had come."

"I cannot meet her! Oh, Mrs. Woodbine, let me hide away somewhere!" Madeline trembled like one in affright.

"Pass into the back parlor, and stand near the door," replied Mrs. Woodbine. "You will know her voice." If it is Mrs. Windall, slip out into the hall and go up stairs. I will not let her know that you are here."

Madeline had scarcely left the room before Mrs. Windall entered.

"Good morning!" she said, fixing her large, weird eyes on the face of Mrs. Woodbine.

"Good morning," was returned, with a smile not over warm, yet sufficiently cordial to put a woman like Mrs. Windall at her ease.

"Have you seen our young friend?" That was the uppermost thing in her mind, and she could not hold it back.

"Yes."

The face of Mrs. Windall brightened.

"When?" she asked.

"She was here this morning."

"Ah! Did she get a letter?"

"No."

"There's hard stuff in her husband," said Mrs. Windall.

"She ought to have known him well enough never to have risked all as she has done."

"How long since she was here?"

"Not a great while."

"Did she say where she was going?"

"No."

Mrs. Windall, who had taken a seat, arose almost immediately.

"How long since she left?"

"She was here not ten minutes ago."

"Oh! so late? How unfortunate that I did not arrive sooner! And you have no idea which way she went?"

"She said nothing of her intentions. I did not question her."

"Poor, unhappy young creature!" Mrs. Windall spoke with feeling. "I am deeply interested in her case. What will she do?"

"The best thing you, or any friend can do for her," replied Mrs. Woodbine, "is to persuade her to go back to her husband, and hold her own where she has rights to maintain. This cutting adrift is bad—always bad. But, you know my opinion on the subject."

"And you know mine," returned Mrs. Windall, tossing her head in a kind of defiant way. "Good morning!" she added, turning off. I think I know where Mrs. Jansen has gone, and I particularly desire to see her."

Mrs. Woodbine made no effort to detain the little woman. She simply responded to her good morning, and they separated. As Mrs. Windall passed into the street, Madeline came down stairs into the hall.

"I will remain for a quarter of an hour, if agreeable," she said, in a subdued manner, like one who asks a favor.

"Stay by all means," returned Mrs. Woodbine, with a cordiality that partially atoned for her previous coldness. "I don't want you to meet that woman again. She is after you with the keen scent of a hound; not for your good, I am persuaded, but to serve some end of her own, Madeline. Out from your husband's protection, there is danger for one so young, so inexperienced, so personally attractive as you are! Pardon my earnestness; but I am deeply concerned for the result of all this."

"I thank you for this interest," returned Mrs. Jansen. "I believe it to be sincere. But, I cannot go back, as I have before said, and live in strife with my husband. Anything but that! You know my views and feelings. I have spoken to you freely. There can be no change. If my husband says, 'Come back,' I will go back. If he keep silence, the separation is eternal!"

"To argue the case farther, is useless," said Mrs. Woodbine.

"Useless!" echoed Madeline.

Mrs. Jansen did not remain longer than the quarter of an hour for which she had asked. Their intercourse during the time was marked by restraint on both sides. Then she went away. But whither. Ah, how much does this question involve! Moved only by feeling, and throwing aside all prudential considerations as something below the heroic from which she believed herself acting, Madeline had taken no care to fill her purse—it contained only a few dollars—nor to provide for the transfer of clothing. She had simply dressed herself for the street, and so gone out, leaving everything behind. Her disappointment in regard to Mrs. Woodbine had alarmed and bewildered her—though it did not change her purpose. In fancy, she had pictured herself in the refuge of her elegant home, finding a world of sympathy in one heart at least. Counsel for the future—aid as it might be needed—wisdom from Mrs. Woodbine's large experience in the world, had all been taken for granted. Alas! How miserably had these expectations failed! How, almost instantly, in her death-like extremity, had this friend

dropped away! Where next was she to turn? The first day's unhappy experience has shown how wildly she had calculated the future.

On leaving the house of Mrs. Woodbine, parting coldly with her at the door, Mrs. Jansen crossed the city towards the East River. There lived on Eighth street, near the Third Avenue, a lady whom she had often met at Mrs. Woodbine's. Her name was Mrs. Cairne. This lady had a kind and gentle way with her that had always pleased Madeline. She was one of the progressive school of women, but not so radical in her sentiments as were many who visited at Mrs. Woodbine's. Mrs. Cairne had, once or twice, called on Mrs. Jansen, and the latter promised to return her visits, but had not yet done so. From some cause, of which she was in ignorance, Mrs. Cairne's reception with several of Mrs. Woodbine's visitors was not of the most cordial nature. Madeline had noticed this, and wondered as to its meaning. The woman was gentle, cultivated, and of lady-like demeanor; and yet she did not seem to attract her own sex strongly. But, the men who happened at any time to be present when she was at Mrs. Woodbine's, were generally marked in their attentions. It had not escaped the observation of Madeline, that in conversation with men, Mrs. Cairne was always more animated than when in conversation with women. At such times, her face would light up with feeling, and her eyes dance and sparkle in a way that made her really fascinating. Something which then appeared in the expression of her face, was not pleasant to Mrs. Jansen. What its meaning was, she could not say; but it impressed her unfavorably.

Of all her friends—after Mrs. Woodbine and Mrs. Lawrence—on whom she felt inclined to call in this painful episode of her life, Mrs. Cairne came next. A dozen were thought of and passed by. Here there seemed the best chance for sympathy and temporary refuge.

As Mrs. Jansen stood at Mrs. Cairne's door, with her hand on the bell, a sudden shadow fell upon her spirit, accompanied by an inward fear, as if in the presence of evil and hurtful things. A strong impulse pressed her back; she let her grasp unloose itself from the bell-handle, and moving away, descended to the street. Five minutes afterwards she returned, walked firmly up to the door, and pulled the bell.

"My dear Mrs. Jansen! How glad I am to see you!" Cordially, and with an air of sincerity not to be mistaken, this welcome to

the already heart-sick and almost fainting wanderer was given.

"I have heard of your trouble," added Mrs. Cairne, as she led Madeline back to the sofa from which she had arisen, and sitting beside her, still held her hand tightly, looking with questioning earnestness into her face.

Madeline could not keep back the tears from her eyes. Here was genuine sympathy, for which her heart was longing. Unable to control herself, she laid her face down upon Mrs. Cairne, and sobbed.

"For one so young! For one whose sky was so warm and bright! Oh, it is hard—very hard!" said Mrs. Cairne, in her tender, loving way.

The whole frame of Madeline quivered with sobs; but, she had a strong will, and self-control, and quickly regained her lost equilibrium. To the pressing inquiries of Mrs. Cairne, made with such an affectionate interest, she opened all her heart—confided in her as completely as if she had been a beloved sister, older and wiser than herself. During the time, Mrs. Cairne sat with one arm drawn around Madeline, and a hand tightly holding one of her hands. Madeline's bonnet and shawl she had already, with kindly officiousness, removed.

No coldness, no shrinking back, or reserve on the part of Mrs. Cairne, followed. Instead, she drew closer to Madeline with a kind of motherly tenderness.

"I have a place for you both in my heart and my house," she said. "Come in and occupy as long as you will. I marvel at Mrs. Woodbine! I knew she was a selfish, and a worldly-wise woman in some things; but I saw, also, so many good points in her character that I gave her credit for more than she was worth. Trouble proves our friends. In blossomy spring and summer, and in the fruitful autumn of our lives, they gather around us thickly; but, the evergreens of friendship are few. You are passing amid your first fiery trials. I trust you have a strong will, a brave heart, and power of endurance. You will need them all."

"I have gone out alone," replied Mrs. Jansen, finding strength in the warm sympathy of Mrs. Cairne; "and if need be, I shall walk alone, straightforward to the end. I may be faint and weary—my feet may bleed—I may be in terror of the evil that meets me on the way; but there is one thing certain—I shall not turn back."

Up to this time, since leaving her home,

Mrs. Jansen had been in a state of strong internal excitement. Nothing had gone tranquilly. The currents of feeling had been seething amid rocks, or dashing down rapids. Now they smoothed themselves out into a calm lake, and a slumbersome quiet, sweet as peace, fell gently over her spirit. Mrs. Cairne gave her a room, neatly furnished, and supplied with books.

"Stay as long as you will," she said, in her sweet, winning way. "I will be your friend, your companion, and your counsellor."

When left alone in her room, Mrs. Jansen, on taking note of her sensations, perceived a heaviness that weighed down her limbs, as though after great fatigue. Accompanying this, was a fullness about the head, and a dull, deep aching of the brain—not severe, yet defining itself with steadily increasing throbs. As one weary, she threw herself on the bed, and was soon lost in a heavy sleep. When she awoke, Mrs. Cairne was sitting by her side.

"Are you not well, dear?" was asked, with evident concern of manner.

An attempt to rise was accompanied by strong painful throbs in the forehead, and a sense of bewilderment. Madeline sunk back on the pillow with a low moan.

"You are sick, child!" said Mrs. Cairne, who saw that her face was flushed. Touching her skin, she perceived that it was hot with fever. "Do you often have spells of sudden illness?"

"No." The answer was dull, as if Madeline had only partly understood the question.

"You are sick, Mrs. Jansen." Mrs. Cairne spoke with an earnestness meant to rouse her guest.

Madeline opened her eyes, and looked about her in a disturbed way.

"I'm afraid I am," she answered.

"What can I do for you?" asked Mrs. Cairne.

"Oh, nothing at all. It will pass off. I've been worried and fatigued. Rest and quiet will do all that is needed."

"Your head aches," said Mrs. Cairne, who saw deep lines cutting down her forehead.

"Very badly."

"Shall I bathe it?"

"If you please."

But, something beyond simple bathing of the hot forehead was needed. Before night, it was deemed best, by Mrs. Cairne, to call in a physician. What he thought of the case, Madeline did not perceive. She was too sick to take much note of what passed around her.

Mrs. Jansen did not leave her bed for several days, nor her room for over a week. Every day, the physician who had been called in by Mrs. Cairne, came to see her. He was a man of about forty, with a frank, cheerful address, and an air of familiarity from which Mrs. Jansen, as fever subsided, and her mind grew clear, shrunk with instinctive delicacy. Something in the touch of his hand, moist and velvety, as he laid it upon hers, sent a faint shiver along her nerves; and the instant his fingers left her pulse, she would draw her hand away. His eyes, dark and with a mystery in them that she could not read, hurt her as she felt them going down into her very consciousness. She could not bear his look, and turned from him, always, with an uneasy feeling, as if there were harm in his very glances.

The Doctor did not intermit his daily calls, even after Mrs. Jansen could sit up in her room. Mrs. Cairne usually came in with him, but almost always made some excuse to leave them alone. He was an intelligent, cheerful talker, full of anecdote, and, as we have intimated, very frank and familiar. But, the repulsion, felt by Mrs. Jansen in the beginning, did not wear off; and she invariably declined to let him take her hand, at the close of his visits, though he never omitted the attempt.

"It is unnecessary to call again, Doctor," she said to him one day, a week after the beginning of her illness. "I am quite well again."

"Not so well as you may think," he answered, smiling in his frank way. "There is some fever in your system yet." And before she could draw back her hand, he had taken it, and was searching for the artery that lay along the fair wrist. "Too quick and hard yet," he said. "You are not entirely safe, madam. The merest trifle may throw you off from this returning healthy balance; and you know that relapses are always bad. Don't be too weary of the sick room. An impatient convalescence is never a sure one."

He had risen to retire; but sat down again, and taking out his pencil, wrote a prescription. Mrs. Jansen remained standing.

"Send for that," he said, handing his patient the slip of paper on which he had been writing. He remained seated, but with his eyes fixed intently on Mrs. Jansen's face. Never had she been so affected, as at this moment, by gaze from human eyes. They seemed

to hold her spell-bound. She felt in thrall. Intense, clear, pulsating in light, full of eager intelligence, like something alive, they seemed to draw, hold, consume. A vague, weak terror seized her. She wished to fly, but had no conscious power of motion. A few moments elapsed, the Doctor not once removing his gaze. Then rising slowly, his eyes not wavering, he reached forth a hand to take one of hers. The touch of that hand was like an electric spark, firing the passive will. Madeline started, and sprang back, her face deadly pale.

"Go, sir!" she said, sternly and imperatively.

He did not move. The eager, hungry light went out of his eyes; and a pleasant smile broke softly over his countenance.

"Don't be excited, my dear madam," he said, in a calm, persuasive voice. "This fever still lingers in your system, and presses on your brain. I only wished to examine your pulse before retiring. The giving of offence was the last thing in my thought. Good day! I will call in the morning and ask if the medicine has done its right work. You need not see me, unless you desire it. Good day."

And bowing in complete self-possession, and with undiminished blandness of manner, the Doctor retired.

Weak and trembling, Mrs. Jansen sunk into a chair. All the little strength she had gained in her brief convalescence, seemed to have departed. "Fever still lingers in your system, and presses on your brain." The Doctor had said this so earnestly, and looked, as he spoke, so kind and calm, that she was already beginning to feel a doubt as to her own clear perception of things. Might she not have altogether mistaken him?

Mrs. Cairne did not come to her room for nearly half an hour after the Doctor retired. Mrs. Jansen was lying down, but arose as she entered, fixing her eyes so searchingly on the face of Mrs. Cairne, that she partly turned it aside, as if she feared more might be revealed there than she wished her guest to know.

"The Doctor says that fever still lurks in your system, and that you must not think of leaving your room."

Mrs. Jansen did not reply—only looked more keenly at Mrs. Cairne.

"I have known Doctor B—— for several years, and have great confidence in him. His practice lies among the best families in New York; and he is much esteemed everywhere,

not only as a skillful physician, but as a true and honorable man. It would be imprudent to disregard his injunction in anything."

"If he should call to-morrow," Mrs. Jansen replied, in a serious tone, "say that I am better, and do not wish to see him."

The expression of Mrs. Cairne's face changed, instantly. She looked both surprised and concerned.

"Why do you say that?" she asked. "I hope you have not misunderstood the Doctor in anything. He's very plain and outspoken, sometimes. In what has he offended you?"

"I did not say that he had offended me in anything—only, that I did not wish to see him. I am better, and do not need his further attentions."

"You have fever," Mrs. Cairne took one of Mrs. Jansen's hands, meaning to offer its unnatural warmth in proof of her declaration. But she found it cold and moist.

"Your hand is hot in mine," returned Madeline.

The two women looked at each other with doubt and questioning in their eyes, and then mutually turned their eyes away, as if each had something in her thought that she wished to conceal.

"I will do as you desire, of course," said Mrs. Cairne, but not with her usual free and kindly way. "I am so warm a friend of Doctor B——'s," she added, as if in apology for her manner, "and know so well his excellence of mind and heart—his skill, his honor, his high professional worth—that it hurts me to know that one so near to me as you are; one whom I so truly love, should feel towards him the slightest repugnance, or misapprehend him in the smallest degree."

"We are not all alike," was the answer of Madeline. There was more in her thought than she intended to say; but she paused with this sentence. Mrs. Cairne waited for her to go on, but she kept silent.

"I'm pained," said Mrs. Cairne, "that anything in the slightest degree unpleasant should have occurred in my house with friends whom I so highly regard. Pray be frank with me, dear Mrs. Jansen! Tell me exactly what appeared in the Doctor's manner?"

Something whispered Mrs. Jansen to be on her guard.

"I have nothing to tell," she replied. "We cannot always trace our impressions to their causes. It is enough, that I do not consider myself in further need of visits from a physician. We all have our peculiarities, you

know. Set this down as one of mine; but do not, I pray, let it stand as anything between us."

"No—no, not for an instant!" warmly and frankly returned Mrs. Cairne, and she kissed her friend. To Mrs. Jansen, the kiss had a strange feeling, as if it were a kiss of betrayal.

On the next day, Doctor B—— called at the usual hour. Mrs. Jansen heard the bell, and going to her room door, opened it and listened. She knew the Doctor's step as he entered the hall. Mrs. Cairne was in the parlor, and came out to meet him. For some time they talked in low voices. Madeline stood in the upper passage, and leaned over the baluster, hearkening intently; but she could not make out a word. From the hall they presently retired into the parlors, and with a sense of relief, Madeline returned to her room and shut the door. She did not feel at ease in her mind. An impression of insecurity lay heavily upon her heart. Many doubts had oppressed her in the last twenty-four hours, many questions perplexed her that were still as far from being solved as ever.

From this state, as she sat musing, she was aroused by hearing the sound of a man's feet on the stairs. The doctor, in spite of her request that his visits should cease, was coming to her chamber! A feeling of indignation flashed through her soul. Her first thought was to confront him at the door, and sternly order him to retire; but a sense of loneliness and weakness quickly brought another resolution. She turned the key in the lock, and then, feeling secure, retired across the chamber, and sat down. A light tap announced the doctor's presence.

"Who is it?" Madeline asked.

"The doctor," was replied.

"I do not wish to see you." There was an angry impulse in the tones of Mrs. Jansen, as she made this abrupt response.

A moment after, and a hand was laid upon the door knob; but the sprung bolt proved an interdict. All was still for the space of a minute. Madeline sat, with half suspended breath, listening anxiously. At length her ears detected a movement, and she fancied that whispers were in the air. The sound of retiring feet came distinctly—a muffled and diminishing sound, that soon fell away into silence. More than an hour elapsed before Mrs. Cairne came to her room.

"You are a foolish thing," she said, half chidingly, yet with her usual frank and plea-

sant manner—"I'm sorry you didn't see the doctor. But, no matter. He thought strangely of you—how could it be otherwise?"

"I thought strangely of him," was Madeline's answer, speaking with slight signs of anger. "He may be gentlemanly, and all that; but when a patient says she does not wish to be seen, both gentlemanly feeling and professional sensitiveness would prompt a physician to regard her will."

"Oh, well, let it pass, dear," said Mrs. Cairne. "The doctor was over-anxious about you, and in trying to see you, even against your wishes, only obeyed a sense of duty. But while he thought strangely of you, as I said, he was not offended. He is used to these idiosyncrasies of patients, and can make allowance for them."

In the eyes of Madeline there had come over Mrs. Cairne a strange transformation. She had noticed something of this from the moment she entered her house—it had progressed day by day, and now as she looked upon her, she did not appear like the same woman she had known. Beneath the courteous manner, the open, free-hearted smile and voice, was revealed another personality—selfish, sinister, false and cruel. Mrs. Jansen felt a chill of repulsion steal along her nerves as she looked at her. To the last remark of Mrs. Cairne, no reply was made.

"I am going out for an hour or two this morning," she said, after remaining with Mrs. Jansen for a short time—"is there anything that you would like me to get for you?"

"Nothing, thank you," was replied, "and don't hurry yourself about returning; I shall find company in a book."

But no book had interest enough for Mrs. Jansen on that morning. Soon after Mrs. Cairne went out, she changed her dress, and descended to the parlor, for the first time in many days. She felt weak, but not sick. Fever had relinquished its hold upon her system. She had been in the parlor scarcely half an hour, when a visitor came in. So absorbed were her thoughts that she had not heard the bell. Rising quickly as a lady entered the parlor, she found herself face to face with Mrs. Windall!

"My dear, dear child!" ejaculated the latter, coming quickly forwards, and grasping her reluctant hand—"what on earth are you doing here?" She spoke in an excited manner, yet in an undertone, very low and mysterious. Her whole manner expressed concern, as well as surprise.

"Why not here?" inquired Madeline, relaxing just a little from her coldness.

"That you should ask such a question, standing as you are in the very gates of death and the jaws of hell!" said Mrs. Windall, with painful solemnity of manner.

Madeline's face grew white.

"Explain yourself. What does this language mean?" demanded Mrs. Jansen.

Mrs. Windall bent to her ear, and whispered a few words. Mrs. Jansen started as if a serpent had stung her, ejaculating—

"No!—no! that is impossible!"

"It is as true as the sun shines, and every moment you linger here is a moment of shame and peril. Should the fact of your having been in this house reach your husband's ears, the barrier between you will become eternal. He will look upon you as one of the vilest."

"And pray what are you doing here?" asked Mrs. Jansen, her pale, trembling lips growing firm.

"Ten minutes ago I met Mrs. Cairne, and learned to my astonishment that you were in her house. That is why I am here. Could I hesitate an instant, when I knew that you were on enchanted ground, full of snares and pitfalls? I am here to warn you of danger, and to aid you in escape. Ah, my dear young friend! the way in which you have elected to walk is a difficult and a dangerous one. Not Christian, on his journey to the Promised Land, was more beset or in more peril than you will be."

"I shall leave instantly," said Mrs. Jansen. She was pale and distressed, and shivered with a nervous chill.

"Have you been sick?" asked Mrs. Windall, observing her more closely.

"Yes; this is the first time I've been out of my room for several days; I've been quite ill with fever."

"Shall I get a carriage?" asked Mrs. Windall.

"Oh, no, no!" replied Mrs. Jansen, "I wouldn't be seen going from here in a carriage for the world. How near do the stages run?"

"Very near."

"I will put on my things and leave immediately. You'll wait until I come down?"

"Yes; but don't be long; Mrs. Cairne may return at any moment, or you may be confronted with some caller, who will bruit the fact of your being here, and blast your good name."

A little while afterwards, and the two women went out together. Madeline's steps

were feeble. She clung to the arm of Mrs. Windall, moving slowly away, her veil drawn tightly over her face. There were many persons in the street as they emerged from the house of Mrs. Cairne, and, from some cause, they attracted attention, two or three individuals stopping and turning to look after them, as they passed along the street.

"Who was that man?" asked Mrs. Windall. They were only the distance of three or four houses away from Mrs. Cairne's. A man, a few steps in advance of them, had paused suddenly, as if to speak, or in surprise. It was plain to Mrs. Windall from the start and shrinking against her of Mrs. Jansen, that she knew him. But Madeline did not meet the sign of recognition—only drew her veil closer, looking down, and passing on.

"Did you know him?" Mrs. Windall repeated her question, but in another form.

"Yes."

"Who was it?"

But the question received no answer.

"He recognized you."

The only response to this was a nervous pressure against the arm on which she was leaning.

Yes, he had recognized her, and she knew it—he, of all men living, the last she would have met of her own will just in that place? Had he seen her leaving the house of Mrs. Cairne? Did he know the reputation it bore? These questions seemed as if they would kill her. Suddenly, there seemed to rise between her and her husband a barrier high as Heaven. She was shut away from him forever. It was no longer by her own will that she stood apart. A wall of separation, impossible to scale, had been erected in an instant, and she was now a hopeless wanderer on the other side.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)